THURSDAY
February 2, 2023

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Tax brackets

Budget 2023: A look at various income tax scenarios, following the new slabs

PAGE 2

1.33%

MGNREGS' SHARE IN FY24 BUDGET

Share drops from 2.14% in FY23

ECONOMY » PAGE 6

1.98%

HEALTH'S SHARE IN FY24 BUDGET

Share remains below 2% in FY24 and FY23

SOCIAL SECTOR » PAGE 9

5.36%

RAILWAYS' SHARE IN FY24 BUDGET

Share increases from 3.88% in FY23

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Pollticks

Finance Minister promises tax relief for the salaried middle class, schemes for artisans and tribal groups, sops for women and MSMEs, and jobs for youth — in an effort to soothe several vote banks before the 2024 Lok Sabha election

Budget 2023
Change aplenty in allocation for key schemes. Find out at: **bit.ly/KeySchemes**

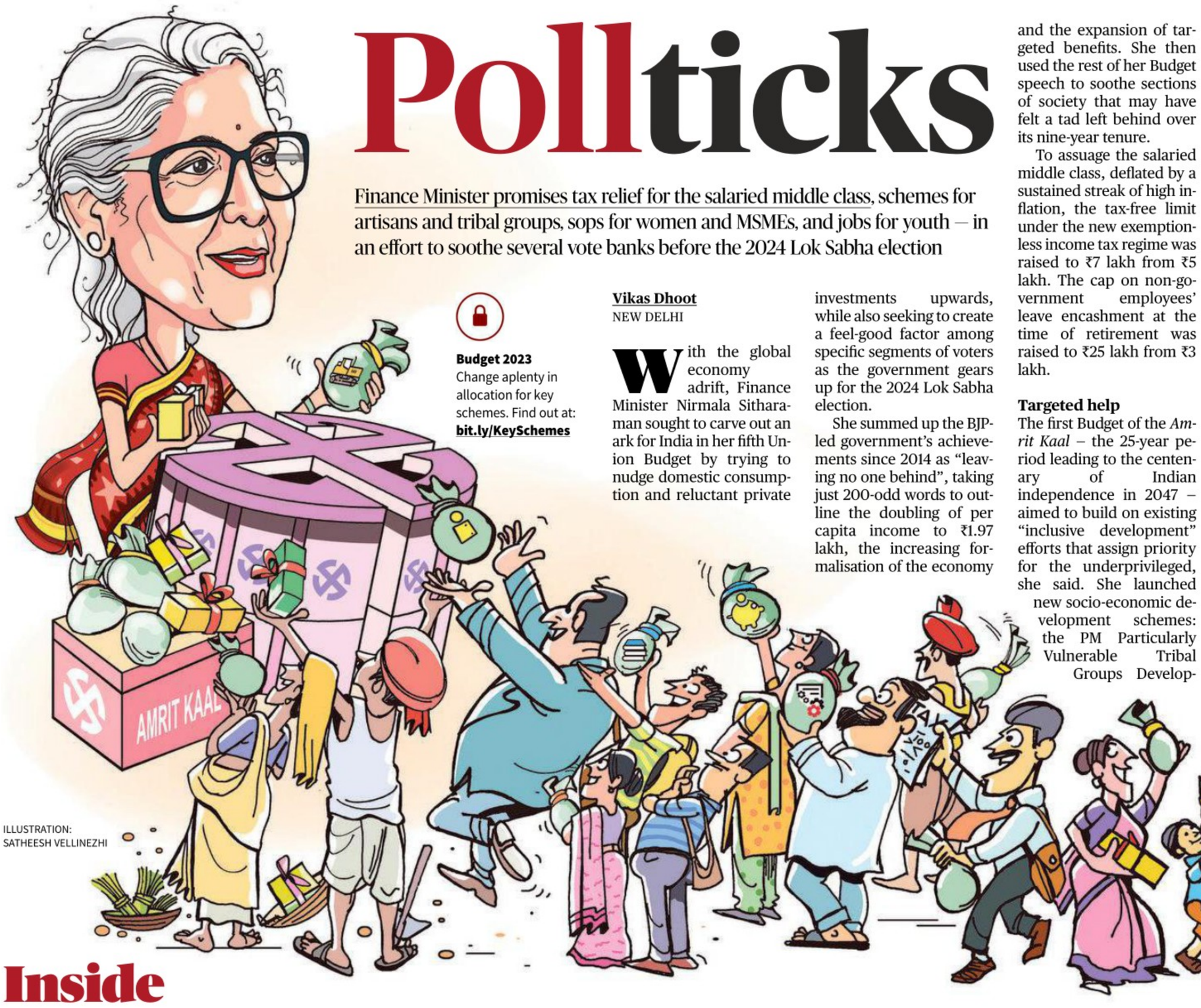

ILLUSTRATION: SATHEESH VELLINEZHI

Vikas Dhoot
NEW DELHI

With the global economy adrift, Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman sought to carve out an ark for India in her fifth Union Budget by trying to nudge domestic consumption and reluctant private investments upwards, while also seeking to create a feel-good factor among specific segments of voters as the government gears up for the 2024 Lok Sabha election.

She summed up the BJP-led government's achievements since 2014 as "leaving no one behind", taking just 200-odd words to outline the doubling of per capita income to ₹1.97 lakh, the increasing formalisation of the economy and the expansion of targeted benefits. She then used the rest of her Budget speech to soothe sections of society that may have felt a tad left behind over its nine-year tenure.

To assuage the salaried middle class, deflated by a sustained streak of high inflation, the tax-free limit under the new exemptionless income tax regime was raised to ₹7 lakh from ₹5 lakh. The cap on non-government employees' leave encashment at the time of retirement was raised to ₹25 lakh from ₹3 lakh.

Targeted help

The first Budget of the *Amrit Kaal* – the 25-year period leading to the centenary of Indian independence in 2047 – aimed to build on existing "inclusive development" efforts that assign priority for the underprivileged, she said. She launched new socio-economic development schemes: the PM Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups Development Mission, and the PM Vishwakarma Kaushal Samman to support artisans from the weaker sections, Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and the Other Backward Classes.

Some measures were also announced to alleviate the lot of micro, small and medium enterprises that have faced successive shocks over the last few years, from demonetisation to the pandemic.

Poll-pleasing focus

While the Minister addressed various sections' aspirations through her less-than-90-minute speech, the broader underlying message was aimed at India's restive youth and their hopes of securing a job.

References to "job" creation in a Budget speech hit a six-year high, with the Minister flagging it seven times in different contexts, compared to just two mentions in the 2022-23 Budget speech and three references in the year before that.

Giving an impetus to growth and job creation, and creating opportunities, especially for the youth, she said, was a key focus of the government's economic agenda to achieve its vision for the *Amrit Kaal*. It is perhaps no coincidence that the last time job creation figured high (with six mentions) was when the late Arun Jaitley presented the Budget for 2018-19 – another Budget presented in the year before a general election.

CONTINUED ON » PAGE 15

"The first Budget of *Amrit Kaal* will build a strong foundation for building a developed India. It gives priority to the deprived

NARENDRA MODI
Prime Minister

"Budget shows how far the government is removed from the people and their concerns about life, livelihood and the growing inequality

P. CHIDAMBARAM
Former Finance Minister

Inside

Taxes
Mobile phones, TVs to get cheaper; toys, bicycles, automobiles to get dearer
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Irrigation
Karnataka to get ₹5,300-cr. assistance to implement the Upper Bhadra Project
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Zero tax for annual income up to ₹7 lakh under new scheme

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman on Wednesday announced that those earning up to ₹7 lakh a year need not pay any income tax under the new tax regime, giving a push for the regime which disallows all exemptions on investments.

Stating that the new regime would become the default, the Minister said taxpayers could, however, still opt to file under the old regime, which allows for tax exemptions and deductions on investments and expenses such as HRA (house rent allowance).

The Budget offered no changes for those opting to stay with the old tax regime.

Those switching to the new tax regime can also hereafter avail themselves of the ₹50,000 standard deduction.

Those earning up to ₹7 lakh annually and opting for new tax regime, could save ₹33,800.

Those with income up to ₹10 lakh would save ₹23,400 and ₹49,400 saving would accrue to those earning up to ₹15 lakh.

Ms. Sitharaman also cut surcharge from 37% to 25% for individuals with income above ₹2 crore.

This would translate into a saving of about ₹20 lakh for those having a salary income of about ₹5.5 crore.

In her Budget speech, Ms. Sitharaman said currently individuals with total income of up to ₹5 lakh do not pay any tax due to rebate.

"It is proposed to increase the rebate for the resident individual under the new regime so that they do not pay tax if their total income is up to ₹7 lakh," Ms. Sitharaman explained.

The Minister added that the number of slabs would be reduced to five.

The new slabs will come into force with effect from April 1.

PMAY share rises by 66%, with more focus on Tier 2 and 3 cities

Sreeparna Chakrabarty
NEW DELHI

Giving a huge boost to affordable housing, the Union Budget presented on Wednesday increased the allocation for the Prime Minister Awas Yojana (PMAY) by 66%. Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman also announced an Urban Infrastructure Development Fund (UIDF), which will be used to create urban infrastructure in Tier 2 and Tier 3 cities.

PMAY was allocated over ₹79,000 crore this fiscal as compared to last year's ₹48,000 crore. The scheme was launched in 2015 with the objective of providing affordable housing to all citizens. The scheme was created to assist the middle-income community, economically disadvantaged groups and low-income groups.

This Credit Linked Subsidy Scheme (CLSS) is aimed to provide its beneficiaries with an interest subsidy to take loans to purchase or build a house.

The Minister said in her speech that States and cities will be encouraged to undertake urban planning reforms and actions to transform cities into "sustainable cities of tomorrow". "This means efficient use of land resources, adequate resources for urban infrastructure, transit-oriented development, enhanced availability and affordability of urban land, and opportunities for all," she said.

Ms. Sitharaman said that the UIDF will be established through the use of priority sector lending shortfall. This will be managed by the National Housing Bank, and will be used by public agencies to create urban infrastructure in Tier 2 and Tier 3 cities. The Centre will allocate ₹10,000 crore per year for the fund.

CONTINUED ON » PAGE 15

Adani calls off ₹20,000-cr. FPO as stocks take a beating

Mahesh Langa
AHMEDABAD

Even as stocks of Adani Group's flagship firm, Adani Enterprises, dropped by 28%, the Ahmedabad-based group on Wednesday night decided to call off its ₹20,000-crore FPO, in a rare move amid growing impact of the Hindenburg report raising allegations of "stock manipulation and accounting fraud".

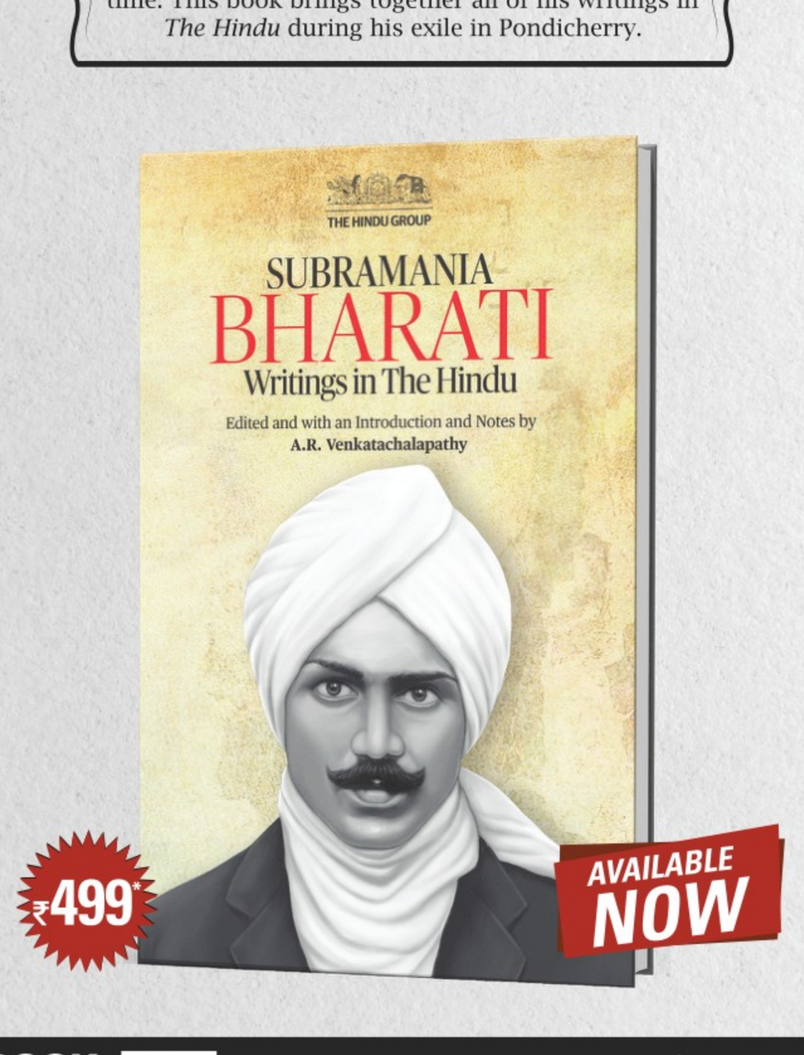
The follow-on public offer (FPO) was fully subscribed on the final day of the subscription on Tuesday with help from some big Indian conglomerates, say sources. In a statement, Adani Enterprises said: "Given the unprecedented situation and the current market volatility, the company aims to protect the interests of its investing community by returning the FPO proceeds and withdraws the completed transaction."

CONTINUED ON » PAGE 15

THE HINDU GROUP

A SPECIAL PUBLICATION FROM THE HINDU GROUP

Subramania Bharati was more than the foremost poet of Tamil Nadu. He was also a sharp commentator on the social and political issues of his time. This book brings together all of his writings in *The Hindu* during his exile in Pondicherry.



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Text&Context

THE HINDU

NEWS IN NUMBERS

Adani conglomerate's shares in a state of freefall

86 In billion dollars is how much Gautam Adani's conglomerate's shares fell on Wednesday, following the release of a U.S. short-seller Hindenburg report. The stock losses saw Adani slip from third place to 15th on the Forbes rich list with an estimated net worth of $75.1 billion, below rival Mukesh Ambani, the chairman of Reliance Industries Ltd. REUTERS

U.S. prepares to send long-range rockets to Ukraine

2 In billion dollars, the worth of longer-range rockets that the U.S. is preparing to send to Ukraine. It will include longer-range missiles, as well as other ammunitions and weapons. The aid is expected to be announced as soon as this week. It is also expected to include support equipment for Patriot air defence systems, precision-guided munitions and Javelin anti-tank weapons. REUTERS

Lebanon devalues official exchange rate by 90%

90 The percentage that Lebanon's currency is devalued, following a plan by the central bank's governor, that Lebanon will adopt a new official exchange rate of 15,000 pounds per U.S. dollar on February 1. Analysts expect the shift to have less impact on the wider economy where most trades take place according to the parallel market rate. REUTERS

Suspects arrested in suicide blast near Pakistan mosque

17 The number of suspects arrested by Pakistan's security agencies, following the suicide blast in a high-security zone mosque in Peshawar that killed 101 people. Army chief Gen. Asim Munir vowed zero tolerance for terror groups and directed his generals to eliminate the threat of militancy. The blast was the deadliest attack on security personnel in decades in Pakistan. PTI

North Korean crypto hackers steal record amount

3.8 In billion dollars how much hackers linked to North Korea stole, a U.S.-based blockchain analytics firm, Chainalysis, said. The report found hacking activity that "ebbed and flowed" throughout the year, with "huge spikes" in March and October. October was the biggest single month ever for cryptocurrency hacking. REUTERS

COMPILED BY THE HINDU DATA TEAM

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Is judicial majoritarianism justified?

Why is it that the judges have to resort to head counting in order to resolve disagreements amongst them? In case of an erroneous majority decision, is there a need to highlight a meritorious minority decision?

EXPLAINER

G.S. Bajpai
Ankit Kaushik

Tightrope walk: Numerical majorities are important in cases which involve the interpretation of constitutional provisions. ISTOCKPHOTO

The story so far:

As the recent majority judgment of the Supreme Court on demonetisation comes under criticism, the minority judgment by J. Nagarathna is being hailed for its challenge to the RBI's institutional acquiescence to the Central government. This questions our blind acceptance of numerical majorities in judicial decision-making.

What is judicial majoritarianism?

As opposed to standard matters heard by Division Benches consisting of two judges, numerical majorities are of particular importance to cases which involve a substantial interpretation of constitutional provisions. In such cases, Constitutional Benches, consisting of five or more judges, are set up in consonance with Article 145 (3) of the Constitution. Such Benches usually consist of five, seven, nine, 11 or even 13 judges. This is done to facilitate decision-making by ensuring numerical majorities in judicial outcomes.

The requirement for a majority consensus flows from Article 145(5) of the Constitution which states that no judgment in such cases can be delivered except with the concurrence of a majority of the judges but that judges are free to deliver dissenting judgments or opinions.

What is at the heart of the debate?

As opposed to representatives of the people in legislatures who may act on hunches or popular perception, judges are experts of law and are aware of the arguments for and against the impugned matter. Given the same, Jeremy Waldron questions why is it that the judges too have to resort to head counting in order to resolve disagreements amongst judges.

All judges on a particular Bench give their rulings on the same set of arguments and written submissions. In light of the same, any differences in judicial decisions can be attributed to a difference in either the methodology adopted and the logic applied by the judges, or, as proffered by the legal realists such as Jerome Frank, upon their own 'judicial hunches' which may be an outcome of their subjective experiences, outlook, and biases. In such circumstances, it is entirely possible that the majority may fall into either methodological fallacies and errors or be limited by their 'judicial hunch' respectively.

In such situations, a meritorious minority decision, irrespective of the impeccability of its reasoning receives little weightage in terms of its outcomes. Our Constitutional history is replete with such meritorious dissents. The dissenting opinion of Justice H.R. Khanna in A.D.M. Jabalpur v. Shivkant Shukla (1976) upholding the right to life and personal liberty even during situations of constitutional exceptionalism is a prime example. Another example is the dissenting opinion of Justice Subba Rao in the Kharak Singh v. State of U.P. (1962) case upholding the right to privacy which received the judicial stamp of approval in the K.S. Puttaswamy v. UOI (2017) case.

Moreover, the rate of dissent itself is subject to influences. To exemplify, Yogesh Pratap Singh, Afroz Alam, and, Akash Chandra Jauhari (2016) found that the rate of judicial dissent at the height of the Emergency in 1976 was a mere 1.27% as opposed to 10.52% in 1980. The study also found that the rate of dissent where the Chief Justice was a part of the Bench was lower than in those cases where the Chief Justice was not on the Bench. Such situations call into question the efficiency and desirability of head-counting procedures for a judicial determination on questions of national and constitutional importance.

What is the gap in our understanding?

Ronald Dworkin proffers a system which may either give more weightage to the vote of senior judges given that they have more experience or to the junior judges as they may represent popular opinion better. Such alternatives, however, can only be explored once we identify and question the rationales which underlie head-counting in judicial decision-making.

The absence of a critical discourse on judicial majoritarianism represents one of the most fundamental gaps in our knowledge regarding the functioning of our Supreme Court. As pending Constitutional Bench matters are listed for hearing, we must reflect upon the arguments of judicial majoritarianism on the basis of which these cases are to be decided.

G.S. Bajpai is Vice-Chancellor, Rajiv Gandhi National University of Law, Punjab where Ankit Kaushik is an Asst. Professor.

THE GIST

- Unlike elected leaders of legislatures who may act on hunches or popular perception, judges are experts of law and are aware of the arguments for and against an impugned matter.
- The rulings of judges can be coloured by their subjective experiences, perceptions, prejudices and biases. Consequently, judges and their judgments can fall prey to 'judicial hunches'.
- In such a situation, a meritorious minority decision, irrespective of the impeccability of its reasoning, receives little weightage in terms of its outcomes. Our Constitutional history is replete with such meritorious dissents.

What is the government's new policy of UPI for NRIs?

The NPCI has allowed non-residents to be on-boarded into the UPI ecosystem. The Union Cabinet approved a ₹2,600 crore incentive scheme to promote RuPay debit cards and low-value BHIM-UPI transactions

Saptaparno Ghosh

The story so far:

On January 10, the National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI) paved the way for international (phone) numbers to be able to transact using UPI. A day later, the Union Cabinet approved an incentive scheme for the promotion of RuPay debit Cards and low-value BHIM-UPI transactions (person-to-merchant) in FY 2022-23. The scheme has an outlay of ₹2,600 crore.

What about international numbers?

In a nutshell, non-resident accounts such as non-resident external accounts (NRE) and non-resident ordinary accounts (NRO), having international numbers, will now be allowed into the UPI payment system. The NPCI had allowed UPI transactions to and from NRO/NRE accounts linked to Indian numbers back in October 2018.

NRE accounts are those used by non-residents to transfer earnings from foreign soil to India while NRO accounts are used to manage income earned in India by non-residents. These incomes could be rent, interest, pension, among other things. At present, users from ten countries will be able to avail the facility– Singapore, Australia, Canada, Hong Kong, Oman, Qatar, the U.S., Saudi Arabia, UAE, and the U.K.

Deep Agrawal, Head of Payments at online payment app PhonePe, told *The Hindu* that the development would allow NRIs to use the payment method for making utility bill payments for their families (or themselves) in India, make purchases from e-commerce or online platforms and make payments to physical merchants who accept UPI QR based payments when they travel to India.

Addressing the infrastructural and technological changes required to support such payments, he said, "Currently, all the internal systems as well as ecosystem players such as banks, NPCI, etc only understand India-based mobile numbers for UPI transactions. With this enablement, a significant number of systems will need to start understanding the same."

What is the discussion on MDR?

The Merchant Discount Rate (MDR) is the charge recovered by the acquirer from the final recipient of the payment, that is, the merchant. It is collected by the acquirer to compensate the varied service providers and intermediaries in the payment system.

Presently, there is no MDR charge levied for RuPay-based debit card and UPI transactions. Stakeholders are hence concerned over cost recovery for the services they provide. In August 2022, the Finance Ministry tweeted that it was not planning to levy any charges for UPI services, adding, "The concerns of the service providers for cost recovery have to be met through other means."

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) and varied stakeholders expressed concerns about the potential adverse impact of the zero MDR regime on the growth of the digital payments' ecosystem. The NPCI requested the incentivisation of BHIM-UPI and RuPay debit card transactions to create "cost-effective value proposition for ecosystem stakeholders, increase merchant acceptance footprints and faster migration from cash payments to digital payments."

Where does UPI stand now?

As of latest available data, 6,779.6 million transactions worth about ₹10.95 lakh crore have been facilitated using UPI. In the previous calendar year, excluding one month of fall (between January and February), UPI transactions have been on an upward trajectory. As per the DigiDhan dashboard maintained by the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology, BHIM-UPI accounted for 52% of all digital payments in FY 2021-22. At present, it stands at 59.74%.

THE GIST

- National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI) paved the way for international (phone) numbers to be able to transact using UPI
- Non-resident accounts such as non-resident external accounts (NRE) and non-resident ordinary accounts (NRO), having international numbers, will now be allowed into the UPI payment system
- As of January 17, 3,192.70 million transactions approximately worth ₹5.52 lakh crore have been facilitated using UPI in the ongoing month, as per NPCI data.

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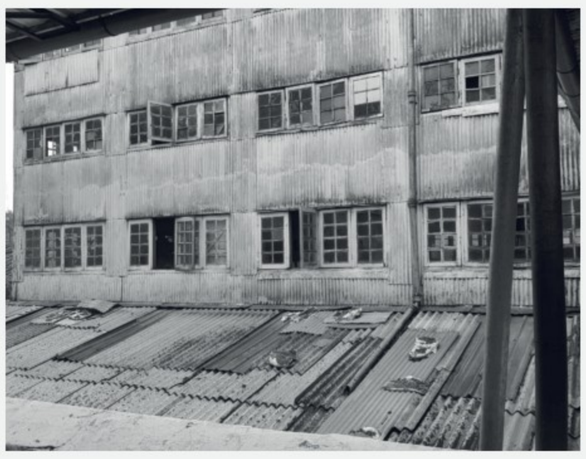

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BUDGET 2023

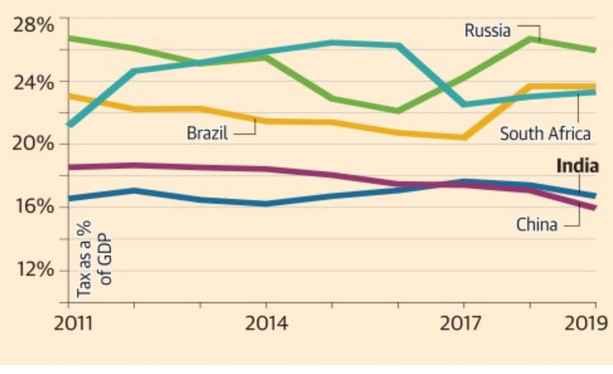
FMSpeak

"[In the new tax regime] persons with income up to ₹7 lakh will not have to pay any income tax"

Tax comparison

Until 2016, India's tax revenue as a percentage of its GDP was the least among BRICS nations at around 17%. By 2019, the share in India had surpassed China by a small margin, though it still remains low compared to Russia, South Africa and Brazil where the tax as a percentage of GDP exceeds 23%

Source: IMF



"The FM has aptly prioritised growth. The Budget strengthens the strategic foundations for our long-term growth

N Chandrasekaran, Chairman, Tata Sons

Mobile phones, TVs to get cheaper; toys, bicycles, automobiles dearer

Plan is to reduce the number of Basic Customs Duty rates on goods other than textiles and agriculture from 21 to 13: Finance Minister

The Hindu Bureau
HYDERABAD

With a view to promoting exports, boosting domestic manufacturing, and enhancing value addition, the Union Budget has proposed a number of changes to the Customs Duty regime which is likely to make mobile phones and TVs cheaper and a certain class of automobiles, including EVs, as well as toys and bicycles dearer.

Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman said, "a simplified tax structure with fewer tax rates helps in reducing compliance burden and improving tax administration. I propose to reduce the number of Basic Customs Duty (BCD) rates on goods, other than textiles and agriculture, from 21 to 13." Consequently, there would be "minor changes in BCD, cesses and surcharges on some items, including toys, bicycles, automobiles and naphtha," Ms. Sitharaman said.

Shot in the arm: Import of capital goods, machinery required to make lithium-ion cells for EV batteries get duty exemption. REUTERS

A reduction in mobile phone prices is likely on account of BCD on camera lens and its inputs/parts, used in manufacture of camera module of mobile phone, made nil from existing 2.5%. It has been decided to continue concessional duty on lithium-ion cells for batteries for another year. "The proposals are aimed at deepening domestic value addition in manufacture of mobile phones," she said.

"Similarly, to promote value addition in manufacture of televisions, I propose to reduce BCD on parts of open cells of TV panels to 2.5% [from the existing 5%]," she said.

In another Indirect Tax proposal, she said towards rectifying inversion of duty structure and encouraging manufacturing of electric kitchen chimneys, BCD on electric kitchen chimney was being increased to 15% from 7.5%, while the levy on heat coils for the appliance is getting reduced from 20% to 15%.

For bicycles, the new rate is 35% as against existing 30%; for toys and parts of toys, other than parts of electronic toys, it will be 70% (60%). BCD on naphtha has been increased from 1% to 2.5%.

The duty on Styrene and Vinyl Chloride is being increased from 2 to 2.5%.

As an impetus to green mobility, the duty exemption is being extended to import of capital goods and machinery required for manufacture of lithium-ion cells for batteries used in EVs, the FM said.

The Budget proposed exemption from the levy on vehicles, specified automobile parts, sub-systems and tyres imported by notified testing agencies for the purpose of testing/certification.

Denatured ethyl alcohol, used in the chemical industry, is being exempted from BCD. The Budget has reduced duty on key inputs for domestic manufacture of shrimp feed.

Proposed concessional tax regime

Income (in INR)	Tax Liability (in INR)
Up to INR 3,00,000	Nil
Between INR 3,00,001-6,00,000	5% of income in excess of INR 3,00,000
Between INR 6,00,001-9,00,000	INR 15,000 plus 10% of the amount by which the income exceeds INR 6,00,000
Between INR 9,00,001-12,00,000	INR 45,000 plus 15% of the amount by which the income exceeds INR 9,00,000
Between INR 12,00,001-15,00,000	INR 90,000 plus 20% of the amount by which the income exceeds INR 12,00,000
Above INR 15,00,000	INR 1,50,000 plus 30% of the amount by which the income exceeds INR 15,00,000

Current concessional tax regime

Income (in INR)	Tax Liability (in INR)
Up to INR 2,50,000	NIL
Between INR 2,50,001-5,00,000	5% of income in excess of INR 2,50,000
Between INR 5,00,001-7,50,000	INR 12,500 plus 10% of the amount by which the income exceeds INR 5,00,000
Between INR 7,50,001 to 10,00,000	INR 37,500 plus 15% of the amount by which the income exceeds INR 7,50,000
Between INR 10,00,001 to 12,50,000	INR 75,000 plus 20% of the amount by which the income exceeds INR 10,00,001
Between INR 12,50,001 to 15,00,000	INR 1,25,000 plus 25% of the amount by which the income exceeds INR 12,50,001
Above INR 15,00,000	INR 1,87,500 plus 30% of the amount by which the income exceeds INR 15,00,000

Normal tax regime

Income (in INR)	Tax Liability (in INR)
Up to INR 2,50,000	NIL
Between INR 2,50,001-5,00,000	5% of income in excess of INR 2,50,000
Between INR 5,00,001-10,00,000	INR 12,500 plus 20% of the amount by which the income exceeds INR 5,00,000
Above INR 10,00,000	INR 1,12,500 plus 30% of the amount by which the income exceeds INR 10,00,000

A look at various income tax scenarios*

*Powered by EY calculations

Gross Income in INR	7,00,000	10,00,000	20,00,000	35,00,000	55,00,000
INDIVIDUAL (upto 60 years)					
Taxable Income, current concessional regime	7,00,000	10,00,000	20,00,000	35,00,000	55,00,000
Taxable Income as per proposed concessional tax regime (after standard deduction)	6,50,000	9,50,000	19,50,000	34,50,000	54,50,000
Taxable Income as per old regime (after considering various deductions)	5,47,600	5,87,600	15,57,600	29,52,600	51,97,600
Income tax payable					
As per current concessional tax regime	33,800	78,000	3,51,000	8,19,000	15,87,300
As per proposed concessional tax regime	-	54,600	2,96,400	7,64,400	15,27,240
As per old tax regime	22,901	31,221	2,90,971	7,26,211	15,69,316
SENIOR CITIZEN (60 - 80 years)					
Taxable Income, current concessional regime	7,00,000	10,00,000	20,00,000	35,00,000	55,00,000
Taxable Income as per proposed concessional tax regime (after standard deduction)	6,50,000	9,50,000	19,50,000	34,50,000	54,50,000
Taxable Income as per old regime (after considering various deductions)	5,47,600	5,87,600	15,57,600	29,52,600	51,97,600
Income tax payable					
As per current concessional tax regime	33,800	78,000	3,51,000	8,19,000	15,87,300
As per proposed concessional tax regime	-	54,600	2,96,400	7,64,400	15,27,240
As per old tax regime	20,301	28,621	2,88,371	7,23,611	15,66,456
SUPER SENIOR CITIZEN (above 80 years)					
Taxable Income, current concessional regime	7,00,000	10,00,000	20,00,000	35,00,000	55,00,000
Taxable Income as per proposed concessional tax regime (after standard deduction)	6,50,000	9,50,000	19,50,000	34,50,000	54,50,000
Taxable Income as per old regime (after considering various deductions)	5,47,600	5,87,600	15,57,600	29,52,600	51,97,600
Income tax payable					
As per current concessional tax regime	33,800	78,000	3,51,000	8,19,000	15,87,300
As per proposed concessional tax regime	-	54,600	2,96,400	7,64,400	15,27,240
As per old tax regime	9,901	18,221	2,77,971	7,13,211	15,55,016

- Rebate u/s 87A under the old tax regime and current Concessional tax regime was available for resident individual having a total income not exceeding INR 5,00,000 per annum, which has now been increased to INR 7,00,000 per annum (only under the proposed Concessional tax regime)
- In case of senior citizen, basic exemption limit is INR 3,00,000 per annum under the old tax regime
- In case of super senior citizen, basic exemption limit is INR 5,00,000 per annum under the old tax regime
- The figures include surcharge (levied at applicable rate) and health and education cess of 4% has been applied
- HRA exemption, Standard deduction, Professional tax, Section 80C, Section 80CCD(1B) and Section 80D have been used for the purpose of old tax regime

Lab-grown diamonds get R&D grant, duty cut boost

Lalatendu Mishra
MUMBAI

To harness the potential of lab-grown diamond (LGD) or synthetic diamond segment, the Union Budget presented by Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman has laid emphasis on research and development to make it competitive in international markets.

"To encourage indigenous production of LGD seeds and machines and to reduce import dependency, a research and development grant will be provided to one of the IITs for five years," the Finance Minister said in Parliament.

To reduce the cost of production, Ms. Sitharaman proposed to reduce basic customs duty on the seeds used in their manufacture.

Vipul Shah, Chairman, Gem & Jewellery Export Promotion Council (GJEPC) said the FM's decision to accept their recommendation pertaining to the LGD industry would ensure India's end-to-end world leadership in rough to finished lab-grown diamond and jewellery manufacturing.

'No capital gains tax'

"Another positive pro-growth move is that the conversion of physical gold into digital gold will not attract capital gains tax," Mr. Shah said.

However, Saiyam Mehra, Chairman, Gem & Jewellery Council (GJC), said, "The gems and jewellery industry's critical concerns are not addressed in the Union Budget 2023-24."

"While the R&D grant will be provided to one of the IITs for the development of lab-grown diamond seeds and machines, the other sectors of the industry have been ignored," he said.

"The reduction in gold customs duty in this Budget was our big expectation," Mr. Mehra added.

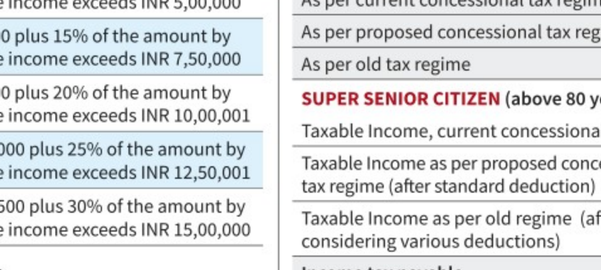
Exemptions on high-value life insurance proceeds pruned

The Hindu Bureau
HYDERABAD

The Union Budget 2023-24 has proposed to limit the income tax exemption on the proceeds of high value life insurance policies.

Mooted as part of an emphasis on better targeting of tax concessions and exemptions, the proposal means that only income from life insurance policies with an aggregate premium up to ₹5 lakh will be exempt from taxation.

"It is proposed to provide that where aggregate of premium for life insurance policies [other than ULIP] issued on or after April 1, 2023, is above ₹5 lakh, income from only those policies with aggregate premium up to ₹5 lakh shall be exempt," the Budget documents said. The proposal will not affect the tax exemption provided to the amount received on the death of the insured person, nor will it affect insurance policies issued till March 31, 2023. This income will be taxable under the head "income from other sources". Deduction will be allowed for the premium paid, if such premium has not been claimed as deduction earlier.



Curbing misuse: Only income from life insurance policies with an aggregate premium up to ₹5 lakh will be exempt from taxation. AFP

The proposal follows a measure initiated in the Finance Act, 2021, pertaining to the proceeds of ULIP policies, where the premium paid, for any year, exceeded ₹2.5 lakh. Both the previous and present moves are aimed at curbing misuse of the exemption by high net worth individuals, who invest in policies having large premium contributions and then claim exemption on the sum received under such policies.

Silver to get costlier as govt. raises basic customs duty to 10%

Press Trust of India
NEW DELHI

Silver and silver jewellery will become expensive as the government on Wednesday announced increasing the basic customs duty (BCD) on silver, both in dore and semi-manufactured form, to 10% to curb imports.

Currently, the basic customs duty on silver dore is 6.1%, while on silver unwrought or semi-manufactured items it is 7.5%.

In her Budget speech for the 2023-24 fiscal, Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman said customs duties on dore and bars of gold and platinum were increased earlier this fiscal.

"I now propose to increase the duties on articles made therefrom to enhance the duty differential. I also propose to increase the import duty on silver dore, bars and articles to align them with that on gold and platinum," Ms. Sitharaman said.

The BCD on both silver dore and semi-manufactured items will be increased to 10%, as per the Budget document.

Founder and MD of Kama Jewelry Colin Shah said the hike in BCD on articles made from gold bars and import duty on silver will lead to a rise in the final price of locally made jewellery and may be challenging for local refineries.

VIEWPOINT

KEKI MISTRY
Vice-chairman & CEO, HDFC Ltd.

'Growth-oriented, on the right path'

The Budget's focus on increasing the tax base and encouraging savings and investments are to be lauded

The Union Budget is one of the most anticipated annual events, where India has consistently embarked on numerous reforms bringing about structural changes. In my opinion, the Finance Minister this year rightly focussed on key factors that align with the larger vision of the government: boosting economic growth, employment generation, encouraging savings and investments, and fiscal consolidation.

The government needs to be commended for keeping the fiscal deficit in line with the Budget estimates of 6.4% of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP). Buoyant collections of direct tax and Goods and Services Tax were the reasons the government was able to successfully keep the fiscal deficit under check. Gross tax collections in the financial year 2022-23 have outperformed the Budget estimates target by more than 10%.

By assuring the nation that the fiscal deficit will be reduced to 5.9% in 2023-24 and further reduced to 4.5% in 2025-26, the FM has shown that fiscal consolidation remains a focus area.

Growing tax base, rationalising taxes

The government's measures to steadily increase the tax base, bringing in greater transparency and enhancing investor confidence are paying dividends. The government needs to be lauded for their Ease of Doing Business initiatives. According to the FM, over 39,000 compliances and 3,400 provisions have been reduced and decriminalised.

The government has rationalised income taxes by extending the benefits of standard deduction

The focus on the salaried class also needs to be applauded. The government rationalised income taxes by extending the benefits of standard deduction, and also by reducing the surcharge rate for high income earners from 37% to 25%. This measure will reduce the maximum tax rate from 42.7% to 39%. These, along with other measures, are aimed at boosting the Indian economy, as rising disposable incomes will promote savings and aid consumption.

The Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana scheme, which creates affordable housing, got a boost with an allocation of ₹79,000 crore. A rapidly growing country like India, with a large young population, needs more homes at affordable price points, which will enable more households to become homeowners. Another notable feature was the establishment of the Urban Infrastructure Development Fund that will be managed by the National Housing Bank. The aim is to create urban infrastructure in smaller cities. This is a laudable move as the construction of housing and the development of surrounding infrastructure should go hand in hand.

By significantly increasing the capital expenditure for the third year in row, increasing it by 33% over the previous year to ₹10 lakh crore (or 3.3% of the GDP), the Budget has sent strong signals that India is equipped to absorb large amounts of investment. According to me, one way to ensure economic growth without spiralling inflation is to build infrastructure.

Overall, this is an excellent Budget which aims to set India on the right course.

POCKET | RAVIKANTH

BIBLIOGRAPHY

How Edgar Allan Poe set the template for the whodunit and literature in his stories

As much as Poe is known for his invention of the detective and the short story, his tales of macabre have inspired countless practitioners of horror, from H. P. Lovecraft to the master of suspense, Alfred Hitchcock, as also cosmologists and cryptologists

In the recent film adaptation of Louis Bayard's novel, *The Pale Blue Eye* (2003), Harry Melling plays Edgar Allen Poe as a bright West Point cadet assisting the detective in solving a grisly crime. AP

Mini Anthikad Chhibber

When the Mad Hatter asks Alice why is a raven like a writing desk, it caused generations to give pause and wonder. The answers were exquisite brain burners from Lewis Carroll's "Because it can produce a few notes," to Aldous Huxley's "Because there is a 'b' in both and an 'n' in neither."

Recreational mathematician, (yes there are those who do math for fun) Sam Loyd, came up with "Poe wrote on both" drawing a line between the poet and mathematician, Carroll and the multifaceted Edgar Allan Poe (January 19, 1809 - October 7, 1849).

There was another line between the two – Carroll wrote the wild and wonderful *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* for the 10-year-old Alice Pleasance Liddell, while the beautifully bewildering, *The Raven*, echoes Poe's themes of loss and longing, inspired by the death of his wife, who he married when she was 13 and he was 26. Huxley, incidentally, described Poe's writing as being too florid, like "wearing a diamond ring on every finger."

While depictions of Poe in popular culture have leaned towards a tortured genius, the Bostonian was an astute critic, causing Fireside Poet James Russell Lowell's famous comment of Poe using "prussic acid instead of ink."

In the recent film adaptation of Louis Bayard's novel, *The Pale Blue Eye* (2003), Harry Melling plays Poe as a bright West Point cadet assisting the detective in solving a grisly crime. It seems only right that the father of detective stories be the Watson to Landor's (Christian Bale) Holmes. Though we all know of the famous residents of 221B Baker's Street, their creator, Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, paid due respect to Poe with, "Where was the detective story until Poe breathed the breath of life into it?"

Wellspring of inspiration

Auguste Dupin who solves *The Murders in the Rue Morgue* (1841) and *The Mystery of Marie Rogêt* (1842) and finds *The Purloined Letter* (1844), set the template for the whodunit, the closed door mystery and the detective itself. Like Doyle comments, each story "is a root from which a whole literature has developed."

The Murders in the Rue Morgue introduces the amateur detective in Dupin and the Watson prototype in his nameless narrator. At least thankfully the Watsons who followed have a back story and a life even if that jezail bullet seems to move from limb to limb.

The two men share rooms with Dupin dazzling the narrator with his analytical mind. Two women are brutally murdered, while two bags of gold lie untouched in the fourth floor room, which is locked from the inside. Witness claims to have heard two voices – one male, speaking French, and another speaking in a language no one can correctly identify. The solution Dupin arrives at through the process of ratiocination is poignant – the poor confused orang-utan!

Doyle's *A Scandal in Bohemia* bears similarities to *The Purloined Letter* even though The Woman, Irene Adler, bests Holmes. As much as he is known for his invention of the detective and the short story, Poe's tales of macabre have inspired countless practitioners of horror from H. P. Lovecraft to the master of suspense, Alfred Hitchcock.

The Pale Blue Eye takes its title from Poe's unsettling short story, *The Tell-Tale Heart*, which tells of an unnamed narrator, murdering his benefactor after taking a dislike for their pale blue eye. The murder, dismemberment in a bathtub, and the burial under floorboards, have again inspired many thriller writers.

Madness and murder are Poe's constants in tales including *The Black Cat*, *The Cask of Amontillado* and *The Fall of the House of Usher*, though the dead seldom stay silent at least for the perpetuator. There is a theory that Poe was getting back at his literary rivals with the grisly crimes in his stories. It seems like a long stretch – just like Bob Dylan's 'Positively 4th Street' is supposedly aimed at his critics. Dylan also mentions the hungry women at Rue Morgue Avenue who will make a mess out of you.

Detective, check, horror, check, wait there is more to mine from Poe's oeuvre – cosmology (he thought of the Big Bang theory 80 years ahead) and cryptology (*The Gold Bug*, inspired U.S. Army cryptographer, William Friedman's lifelong interest in codes).

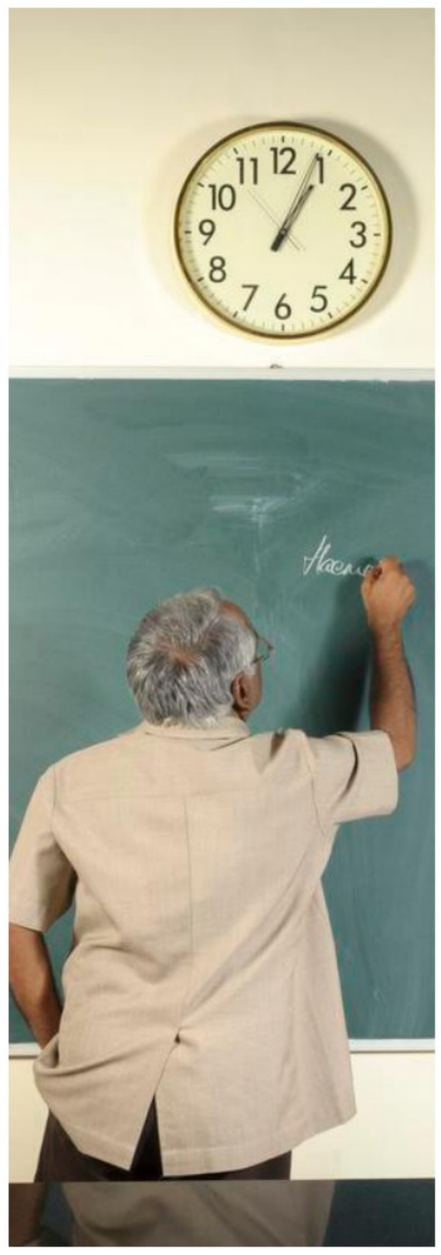
Science fiction

In science fiction, Jules Verne was inspired by Poe's only novel, *The Narrative of Arthur Gordon Pym of Nantucket* (1838), which flirts with the hollow earth theory, and even wrote a sequel, *An Antarctic Mystery*, continuing Pym's adventures after the abrupt ending of Poe's novel.

Hank Pym of *Ant Man* which belongs to the Marvel Cinematic Universe is a quantum physicist, and probably in another universe descended from Arthur Pym.

Poe's death of unknown causes, incoherent and wearing someone else's clothes at the age of 40, is the greatest mystery of all and it is no surprise that it has spawned many theories and narratives including Matthew Pearl's *The Poe Shadow*.

From books and graphic novels to television, movies, radio plays and the Edgars, Poe is as constant as the raven and the writing desk and there is no sign of a nevermore anywhere on the horizon.



FROM THE ARCHIVES

Know your English

Several readers want to know whether it is correct to use 'good' in the question, '*What is your good name?*'

In some Indian languages 'good' is used before 'name' when the name of the person is asked. It is not ungrammatical. It is a matter of culture rather than grammar. It is not used in English. But I don't think anyone will object to being told that his name is a good one!

Mr. S. Suresha of Nyamathi (Karnataka) wants to know which of the following is correct: (a) A memo was served with him, (b) A memo was served on him.

'*A memo was served on him*' is correct. 'To serve on' means 'to bring to notice, deliver, or execute as required by law'. This is a legal expression. You can also say '*He was served with a memo*'.

Mr. Sambhapur G. Kasinath of Sandur wants to know the meaning of 'flibbertigibbet'.

It means 'a silly, gossipy, frivolous person'. It generally refers to a woman. 'Flibberti' rhymes with 'liberty' and 'gibbet' is pronounced 'jibit'.

Mr. P. I. John of U.C. College, Alwaye wants to know which of the following is correct: (a) ten years ago, (b) ten years back.

Both are correct. 'Back' is generally used in informal contexts. 'Ago' can be used both in formal and informal speech and writing.

Mr. S. Jayendran of Government Arts College, Madras, wants to know the meaning of the word 'fudge'.

'Fudge' has several meanings. When someone cheats in an examination, you say '*He fudged on his examination.*' When someone doesn't keep his promise, you say '*He fudged on his promise*'. When someone exaggerates or falsifies accounts, you say '*He has fudged the accounts*'. The word rhymes with 'judge'.

Mr. P. Sridhar of Kolar Gold Fields wants to know how 'Reuter' is pronounced.

It rhymes with 'loiter'.

THE DAILY QUIZ

A quiz on the rivers of India

Please send in your answers to dailyquiz@thehindu.co.in

S. Venkataraghavan

QUESTION 1
From where does the Indus river originate ?

QUESTION 2
Which river is also known as Dakshina Ganga?

QUESTION 3
The Krishna Raja Sagara Dam, located in Karnataka, is built on which river?

QUESTION 4
Which is the only perennial river in Tamil Nadu?

QUESTION 5
According to the Indus Waters Treaty in 1960 which determined how the region's rivers are to be divided, the control over three eastern rivers of the Beas, Ravi and Sutlej was given to India, which rivers do Pakistan have control over ?

Identify this place where the river Alaknanda meets the Bhagirathi river and both rivers thereafter flow on as the Ganges river or Ganga.

Answers to the previous day's daily quiz:

1. How many Budgets did Morarji Desai present? Who took over after he quit? **Ans: 10 Budgets, Indira Gandhi**
2. Who presented the shortest Budget speech for the interim budget of 1977? **Ans: Hirubhai M. Patel; 800 words**
3. When was the Budget initially presented? Who changed this tradition? **Ans: 5 p.m., Yashwant Sinha**
4. This Budget was presented every year a few days before the Union Budget, till 2016. Who presented this last? **Ans: Rail Budget, Suresh Prabhu**
5. The ceremony related to the printing of the Budget. Who serves the dish? **Ans: Halwa ceremony; Finance Minister**
6. Nirmala Sitharaman replaced the tradition of Bahi-Khata with what? **Ans: Paperless Budget**
7. Visual question. **Ans: R.K. Shanmukham Chetty**

Early Birds
KN Viswanathan — S Sampath Kumar — Bhanu Priya Ashok — M. Suresh Kumar — Arunav Hazarika

Word of the day

Flummox:
bewildered, perplexed

Synonyms: vex, stupefy, baffle, dumbfound, puzzle, amaze

Usage:
He was flummoxed after reading the legal document.

Pronunciation: bit.ly/flummoxword

International Phonetic Alphabet: /ˈflʌm.əks/

For feedback and suggestions for Text & Context, please write to **letters@thehindu.co.in** with the subject 'Text & Context'

BUDGET 2023

FMSpeak

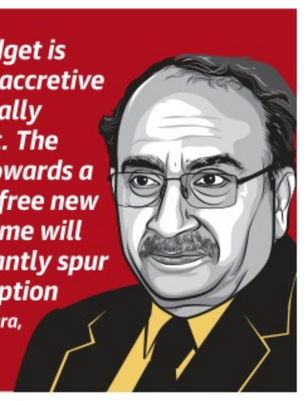
For investors to reclaim unclaimed shares and unpaid dividends from the IEPFA with ease, an integrated IT portal will be established

Bearish response

The stock market did not react too well to the Budget speech with most sectors experiencing a decline in their stock prices Wednesday, except for Information Technology (0.73% increase) and FMCG (0.77% increase). Energy stocks took the biggest beating (2.05% decrease)
Source: BSE

Energy	-2.05% ▼
Healthcare	-0.32% ▼
Fast moving consumer goods	+0.77% ▲
Industrials	-0.53% ▼
IT	+0.73% ▲
Auto	-0.88% ▼
Banks	-0.45% ▼
Telecom	-2.20% ▼
Finance	-0.61% ▼
Realty	-0.85% ▼
Oil and gas	-1.95% ▼
Capital goods	-0.17% ▼
Power	-1.77% ▼

"The Budget is growth accretive and fiscally prudent. The move towards a clutter-free new tax regime will significantly spur consumption
Dinesh Khara,
Chairman,
SBI



PAN to be used as common identifier for digital systems

Move will help in further promoting ease of doing business, says FM

Press Trust of India
NEW DELHI

Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman on Wednesday said that Permanent Account Number (PAN) would be used for common identifier for all digital systems of specified government agencies.

The move would help in further promoting ease of doing business in the country.

PAN is a 10-digit alphanumeric number allotted by the Income Tax department to a person, firm or entity.

Ms. Sitharaman also said that if MSMEs (micro, small and medium enterprises) failed to execute contract, 95% of performance security would be returned to small business as part of 'Vivad Se Vishwas' scheme.

Vivad Se Vishwas scheme provides for settlement of disputed tax, interests, penalty or fees in relation to an assessment or reassessment order on payment of 100% of the disputed tax and 25% of the disputed penalty or interest or fee.

Budget euphoria fizzles out in capital markets as Adani stocks slump

Equities end lower due to the sell-off in Adani Group stocks as news emerges that Credit Suisse stopped accepting its bonds as collateral for margin loans to private banking clients

Lalatendu Mishra
MUMBAI

Shares of Adani Group firms taking a beating on the bourses wiped out the gains the capital markets reaped in the early hours of trade following a positive response to the presentation of the Union Budget on Wednesday.

In a roller-coaster ride, the S&P BSE Sensex surged more than 700 points in intraday trade, but closed with minor gains of 158.18 points, or 0.27%, to settle at 59,708.08.

In contrast, the NSE Nifty declined 45.85 points, or 0.26%, to end at 17,616.30. Shares of Adani Enterprises nosedived 28.45% to close at ₹2,128.70 on the BSE, while Adani Ports plunged to 19.69%.

"Despite positive budgetary announcements, Indian equities closed lower due to the sell-off in Adani Group stocks when news emerged that Credit Suisse has stopped accepting bonds of Adani Group as collateral for margin loans to its private banking clients," said Mitul Shah, head of research, Reliance Securities.

Fall season: Adani Enterprises' shares nosedived 28.4% to close at ₹2,128.70 on the BSE, while Adani Ports plunged 19.7%. REUTERS

The Budget adequately focused on the holistic development of the economy with special emphasis on infrastructure, MSME financing needs and affordable housing, Mr. Shah said.

"The surge in capex spending will assure a significant multiplier effect on the overall medium-term growth prospects of the economy," he said.

The bulls were in control in the first half, but the tone reversed as the session progressed, said Ajit Mishra, vice-president, technical research, Religare Broking Ltd.

"A well-tuned Budget with strong emphasis on consumption and capex has lifted optimism in the market. However, volatility sparked in the latter half as focus shifted back to the Adani saga and Federal Open Market Committee meeting [in the U.S.]," said Vinod Nair, head of research at Geojit Financial Services.

"Life insurance players witnessed heavy selling as the Budget pushed for the new tax regime, making insurance products less appealing as a tax-saving tool," he added.

Stating that the markets had a knee-jerk reaction on Wednesday, stock analyst Arun Kejriwal, founder of Kejriwal Research, said the indices should rise on Thursday once traders understand the implications of the Budget proposals.

Budget proposes amendments to charge up GIFT IFSC

Lalatendu Mishra
MUMBAI

The Union Budget has proposed several measures to enhance business activities at Gujarat International Finance Tec-City - International Financial Services Centre (GIFT IFSC).

These include delegating powers under the SEZ Act to the International Financial Services Centre Authority (IFSCA) to avoid dual regulation, setting up a single-window IT system for registration and approval from IFSCA, SEZ authorities, Goods & Services Tax Network (GSTN), Reserve Bank of India (RBI), SEBI and the Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (IRDAI), besides permitting acquisition financing by IFSC banking units of foreign banks.

As per the Budget proposal, a subsidiary of EXIM Bank for trade re-financing would be established at GIFT IFSC and IFSCA Act would be amended for statutory provisions for arbitration, ancillary services, and avoiding dual regulation under SEZ Act.

The measure also includes recognising offshore derivative instruments as valid contracts, Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman told Parliament.

"For countries looking for digital continuity solutions, we will facilitate setting up of their Data Embassies in GIFT IFSC," Ms. Sitharaman said.

In a note on the Budget, law firm Cyril Amarchand Mangaldas said as far as GIFT IFSC was concerned, income distributed by the IFSC banking units to non-resident Offshore Derivative Instruments (ODI) holders were proposed to be exempt in the hands of ODI holders.

"Transfer of ODIs is already exempt in the hands of non-residents," the firm said.

Ketaki Mehta, partner-GIFT City, Cyril Amarchand Mangaldas said the move would greatly encourage many private entities to consider GIFT IFSC with renewed enthusiasm.

KARNATAKA INDUSTRIAL AREAS DEVELOPMENT BOARD
(A Government of Karnataka Undertaking)
49, East Wing , 4th & 5th Floor, Khanija Bhavan, Race Course Road, Bengaluru – 560 001. Phone No. 080-22265383. Website: www.kiadb.in

No. IADB/ENGG/ETND-EP-56/14/2022-23 Date:01.02.2023

SHORT TERM NOTICE INVITING TENDER
(Through GOK e–Procurement Portal Only)

Item rate Tender under two cover bid system is invited for the work mentioned below as per the Karnataka Transparency in Public Procurement Act 1999 and Rules 2000 through electronic procurement from eligible Contractors holding valid Class-I (Civil) issued from KPWD, Government of Karnataka who have got adequate financial resources & sufficient past experience for the following work of **Formation of Industrial Layout Including Formation of 30M Wide & 18M Wide Roads Including Asphalting, Construction of RCC Side Drains, RUB, RCC Cross Drainage Works, SWD & HDPE Dual Water Supply Pipeline etc, at 2nd Phase Boundary Block Sector-1 of Gowribidanur Industrial Area, 3rd Phase, Gowribidnur Taluk, Chikkaballapura District.**

The last date and time of receipt of tender is : **14.02.2023 upto 04:30 pm.**

Applicants May Download Bidding Documents from the E-Procurement Portal **https://eproc.karnataka.gov.in**

Sd/-
Chief Engineer - 1

DIPR/CP/JA/4429/2022-23

PUBLIC NOTICE

This is to notify that my client Smt.N. Sree Vidya, W/o .M.Govardhan, residing at # 39/5-1, Appareddy Palya, Indiranagar, Bangalore-38 is negotiating to purchase the property described in the schedule given hereunder from its original owner Sri. Padmanabhan Balamani & Smt.Preethy Padmanabhan, residing at #11, Ananya Gardens, Nana Nani Phase-2, Mowthi Hospital Road, Coimbatore-641046.

Anybody having any claim over the schedule property may please lodge their objections in writing along with documents within 10 days from today. If no objections are received to the intended sale transaction within the said time, sale will be completed and no claim in respect of the schedule property will be entertained in future from anybody.

SCHEDULE PROPERTY

All the piece and parcel of the residential site No.127, BDA Katha No.RO(E)127/RW/2007-08, Dated 08.08.2007, Present BBMP Katha.No.108/127 in converted Sy.No.197/1, formed in the residential Layout Known as "RELIABLE WOODS" formed and converted for residential purpose and approved by the Special Deputy Commissioner, Bangalore Dist.Vide Conversion Order No.B.DIS.ALN(A)SR.126/2004-05 dated 24.07.2004, situated at Kudlu Village, Sarjapura Hobli, Anekal Taluk, Bangalore under BBMP Ward No.191, measuring East by 62 Feet 3 Inches and West by 59 Feet, and North by 30 Feet 9 Inches and South by 22 Feet 3 Inches in all totally measuring 1620Sq.Feet with Improvements and bounded on :

East by : Site No.126,
West by : Road & Private Property,
North by : Road,
South by : Private Property.

Sd/-
G.KAMALADHAR, Advocate,
Office at # 002, Ground Floor, "LAKSHMI OPEL" Apartments, Opposite to St.Peters School, Kaikondrahalli, Sarjapura Main Road, Bangalore-560 035,
Dated: 01/02/2023 Place : Bangalore

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ನಗರಸಭಾ ಕಾರ್ಯಾಲಯ, ಮಡಿಕೇರಿ
ಕೊಡಗು ಜಿಲ್ಲೆ

ಕಾವೇರಿ ಕಲಾಕ್ಷೇತ್ರದ ಹತ್ತಿರ, ಮಡಿಕೇರಿ–571201 ದೂರವಾಣಿ : 08272–228323
Email : itstaff_ulb_madikeri1@yahoo.com ಫ್ಯಾಕ್ಸ್ : 08272–223998

ಸಂ:ಮನಸ/ತಾಂತ್ರಿಕ/ಜೆಇ.4/ಟೆಂಡರ್–03/2022–23/ಕರೆ–3 ದಿನಾಂಕ : 31–01–2023

ಟೆಂಡರ್ ಪ್ರಕಟಣೆ (ಕರ್ನಾಟಕ ಸರ್ಕಾರದ ಇ–ಪ್ರೊಕ್ಯೂರ್‌ಮೆಂಟ್ ಪೋರ್ಟಲ್ ಮುಖಾಂತರ ಮಾತ್ರ)

ಈ ಮೂಲಕ ಪ್ರಕಟಿಸುವುದೇನೆಂದರೆ, ಈ ಕೆಳಕಂಡ ಕಾಮಗಾರಿಯನ್ನು ನಿರ್ವಹಿಸಲು, ಲೋಕೋಪಯೋಗಿ ಇಲಾಖೆಯಲ್ಲಿ ನೋಂದಾಯಿಸಲ್ಪಟ್ಟಿರುವ ಅರ್ಹ ಗುತ್ತಿಗೆದಾರರು ಅಥವಾ ಅರ್ಹ ಸಂಸ್ಥೆಗಳಿಂದ ಸ್ಟಾಂಡರ್ಡ್ ಟೆಂಡರ್ ಡಾಕ್ಯುಮೆಂಟ್ ನಿಯಮಾವಳಿಯಂತೆ ಕನಿಷ್ಠ ದರಗಳನ್ನು ಆಹ್ವಾನಿಸಲಾಗಿದೆ. ಅರ್ಹ ಗುತ್ತಿಗೆದಾರರು ಅಥವಾ ಅರ್ಹ ಸಂಸ್ಥೆಗಳು ಟೆಂಡರ್ ವಿವರಗಳನ್ನು **www.eproc.karnataka.gov.in** ವೆಬ್‌ಸೈಟ್ ಮೂಲಕ ಪಡೆದುಕೊಂಡು ನಂತರ ಭರ್ತಿ ಮಾಡಿದ ಟೆಂಡರ್‌ಗಳನ್ನು ಇ–ಪ್ರೊಕ್ಯೂರ್‌ಮೆಂಟ್ ಪೋರ್ಟಲ್ ಮುಖಾಂತರ ಸಲ್ಲಿಸಬಹುದು.

ಹೆಚ್ಚಿನ ಮಾಹಿತಿ, ಕಾಮಗಾರಿ ವಿವರಣೆ, ನಿಬಂಧನೆ ಹಾಗೂ ಷರತ್ತುಗಳಿಗೆ ಕಛೇರಿಯ ವೇಳೆಯಲ್ಲಿ ಈ ಕಛೇರಿಯ ತಾಂತ್ರಿಕ ಶಾಖೆಯನ್ನು ಸಂಪರ್ಕಿಸುವುದು.

ಟೆಂಡರ್ ಸಲ್ಲಿಸುವ ವಿವರ

1. ಪೂರ್ವಭಾವಿ ಸಭೆ ದಿನಾಂಕ ಮತ್ತು ಸ್ಥಳ : 10–02–2023 ರಂದು ಸಮಯ 03:00 ಗಂಟೆಗೆ, ನಗರಸಭಾ ಕಾರ್ಯಾಲಯ ಮಡಿಕೇರಿ
2. ಟೆಂಡರ್ ಸ್ವೀಕರಿಸುವ ಕೊನೆಯ ದಿನಾಂಕ : 02–03–2023ರ ಅಪರಾಹ್ನ 05.30 ಗಂಟೆಗೆ
3. ಟೆಂಡರ್ ತೆರೆಯುವ ದಿನಾಂಕ : 03–03–2023ರ ಅಪರಾಹ್ನ 05.30 ಗಂಟೆಗೆ ಅಥವಾ ಮುಂದೆ ಸೂಚಿಸುವ ದಿನದಂದು
4. ಟೆಂಡರ್ ತೆರೆಯುವ ಸ್ಥಳ : ನಗರಸಭಾ ಕಾರ್ಯಾಲಯ, ಮಡಿಕೇರಿ.

ಕ್ರ.ಸಂ.	ಕಾಮಗಾರಿಯ ಹೆಸರು	ಇ.ಎಂ.ಡಿ. ಮೊತ್ತ	ಟೆಂಡರ್‌ಗಿಟ್ಟ ಮೊತ್ತ	ಅವಧಿ
1	ಮಡಿಕೇರಿ ನಗರಸಭೆಯ ನೆಲಭರ್ತಿ ಜಾಗದಲ್ಲಿ ಸಂಗ್ರಹವಾಗಿರುವ ಪಾರಂಪರಿಕ ತ್ಯಾಜ್ಯವನ್ನು ಸಂಸ್ಕರಿಸಿ ವಿಲೇ ಮಾಡುವ ಕಾಮಗಾರಿ Indent No: DMA/2022-23/OW/WORK_INDENT/133314/Call-3	ರೂ. 6,77,000/–	ರೂ.4,50,99,600/–	12 ತಿಂಗಳುಗಳು

ಈ ಕಛೇರಿಯಿಂದ ನೀಡುವ ಇತರೆ ಎಲ್ಲಾ ಷರತ್ತುಗಳಿಗೆ ಬದ್ಧರಾಗಿರತಕ್ಕದ್ದು.

ಸಹಿ/– ಶ್ರೀ ಸುಬ್ರಮಣಿ ಉಮೇಶ್, ಸ್ಥಾಯಿ ಸಮಿತಿ ಅಧ್ಯಕ್ಷರು, ನಗರಸಭೆ, ಮಡಿಕೇರಿ.
ಸಹಿ/– ಶ್ರೀಮತಿ ಸವಿತಾ ರಾಕೇಶ್, ಉಪಾಧ್ಯಕ್ಷರು, ನಗರಸಭೆ, ಮಡಿಕೇರಿ.
ಸಹಿ/– ಶ್ರೀ ವಿಜಯ, ಪೌರಾಯುಕ್ತರು, ನಗರಸಭೆ, ಮಡಿಕೇರಿ.
ಸಹಿ/– ಶ್ರೀಮತಿ ಅನಿತಾ ಪೂವಯ್ಯ, ಅಧ್ಯಕ್ಷರು, ನಗರಸಭೆ, ಮಡಿಕೇರಿ.

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RAJASTHAN STATE GANGANAGAR SUGAR MILLS LIMITED
NIB. No. RSRSGSM/ENA/2022-23/Pur/61 Dated :- 27/01/2023

E-BID SHORT NOTICE

Bids For Modification of Distillery capacity 30 KLPD R.S. plant with 1.2 MW biomass based (multifuel boiler and power plant) to 30 KLPD ENA plant and machinery complete supply, erection, commissioning including civil work and structure at Chak23F, Teh. ShriKaranpur, Sriganganagar. are invited from interested bidders up to 6.00 p.m. of 06.02.2023. Other particulars of the bid may be visited on the procurement portal (**http://eproc.rajasthan.gov.in**, **http://sppp.rajasthan.gov.in**) of the state; **http://rajexcise.gov.in**, departmental website. **UBN: GSM2223GLRC00192**
Raj.Samwad/C/22/13910 Dy. General Manager (Purchase)

ODISHA STATE SEEDS CORPORATION LIMITED
(A GOVERNMENT UNDERTAKING)
SANTARAPUR, BHUBANESWAR- 751002.
Tel-MD 0674- 2340573, Fax-2340096, Website - http://www.osscltd.in

PURCHASE OF SEEDS FOR KHARIF-2023
INVITATION FOR BIDS No-OSSC/MKTG-35/2023

Managing Director, Odisha State Seeds Corporation Ltd. invites limited tender from the Seed Producers including Govt. Agencies having valid seed license for purchase of seeds for Kharif 2023 on Item Wise Rate Contact basis in Double Cover System through **ONLINE MODE ONLY** for the works below.

1.	Name of work	Purchase of Seeds for Kharif-2023
2.	No. of work	01 no.
3.	Availability of Bid Document in Portal	15.00 hours on dt. 01.02.2023 to 17.00 hours on dt. 21.02.2023
4.	Last date of receipt of tender in portal	17.00 hours on dt. 21.02.2023
5.	Date and Time of Opening of Bid	10.30 hours on dt. 22.02.2023

Further the details can be seen from the website **https://tendersodisha.gov.in**. Any addendum/corrigendum/cancellation can also be seen in the said website. OSSC Ltd reserves the right to accept or reject the tender without assigning any reason thereof.

CAD-4658: Sd/- Managing Director, OSSC Ltd, BBSR
OIPR-01106/11/0019/2223

ODISHA CONSTRUCTION CORPORATION LIMITED
(A Govt. of Odisha Undertaking)
UNIT-VIII, BHUBANESWAR
e-mail: theoccltd@odishaconstruction.com
GSTIN - 21AAACO2571K2ZM

e-Procurement Notice No. 45 /OCCL/2022-23 (on-line)

Type of Work :- **Excavation of Spill channel from RD 80m to RD 750m of Kanpur Irrigation Project. (Balance work)**
Total No of Works :- **01 (One) No.**
Period of completion :- **06 (Six) calendar months.**

Bid Identification No.	Amount put to Tender (Approx.) (Rs.in Lakhs)	Bid Security (through on-line transfer) (in Rs.)	Availability of Tender (On-line)	Submission of Tender (On-line)
OCC-KSP/04/2022-23	418.27 Lakhs	4,19,000/-	02.02.2023, 03.30 P.M. to 16.02.2023, 5.30 P.M.	02.02.2023, 03.30 P.M. to 16.02.2023, 5.30 P.M.

Procurement Officer - **Managing Director, OCC Ltd., Bhubaneswar**
Date of opening of the Technical Bid: **17.02.2023, 12.00 Noon.**
Further detail can be seen from the Govt. website (**www.tendersodisha.gov.in**)

CAD-4686 **Managing Director**
OIPR-34120/11/0043/2223

BUDGET 2023

FMSpeak

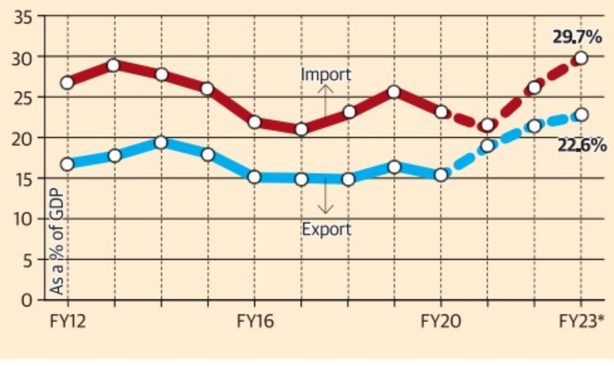
"In the last nine years, the Indian economy has increased in size, and per capita income has more than doubled to ₹1.97 lakh

Imports to keep surging

India's imports are projected to surge to around 30% of the GDP by the end of FY23, quite a leap from 21% in FY21. On the other hand exports are expected to stagnate at around 22.6% in FY23, increasing slightly from 19% in FY21

Source: RBI, PIB

** First advanced estimates*



"The Budget will reinforce India's position in the global economy whilst having a transformative impact on the bottom of the pyramid

Sanjiv Puri, MD, ITC Ltd

VIEWPOINT

SANJIV BAJAJ
President, CII

A brilliant balancing act

Budget proposals move forward on path of fiscal consolidation while also delivering high growth and inclusion

A brilliant balancing act is how I will describe the Union Budget proposals, moving forward on the path of fiscal consolidation while also delivering high growth and inclusion. The continued emphasis on capex-led growth strategy is a welcome move. Last year's capex boost impacted gross fixed capital formation (GFCF) positively, with the first advanced estimates expecting an 11.5% increase in GFCF in FY23. A further increase of 33%, on top of a 35% increase last year, is in line with CII's recommendations. This will boost economic productivity, unlocking India's growth potential. The multiplier impact of capex will also boost demand, helping crowd in private investments. The public capex and infrastructure push, focus on ease-of-doing business, opportunities arising from green growth interventions, and the fund for agriculture start-ups will all encourage private investments.

Focus on agriculture

Inclusion and targeted support continue to be a strong theme. Focus on agriculture, skill development and 'Vanchit ko Variyta,' under which a plethora of schemes have been launched for women, elderly and the youth, will help improve lives.

The focus on capex, tourism. MSMEs and agri related interventions including those under the co-operative based programmes, will generate employment. Emphasis on skilling with industry partnership and programmes like Kaushal Vikas Yojana 4.0 skilling lakhs of youth in the next 3 years; establishment of 30 Skill India Centres, including in the field of 3D Printing, AI, IoT, and Drones; skilling the youth for international opportunities, among others, will enhance the employability of the youth, preparing them for Industry 4.0. The thrust on employment and employability will boost incomes, broad-basing consumption demand in the economy.

The public capex and infrastructure push, focus on ease-of-doing business, opportunities arising from green growth interventions, will all encourage private investments

With a fiscal deficit target of 5.9% for FY24, pretty much in line with the 6% suggested by the CII, and the reiteration of moving towards a fiscal deficit of below 4.5% by FY26, the Budget sets the roadmap for the necessary fiscal consolidation. Fiscal consolidation is an imperative for macro-economic stability in the wake of an uncertain economic environment prone to external shock and for boosting investor confidence. The Budget also continues the focus on cooperative federalism and reform push. The support to States in the form of 50-year interest-free loan, incentives for undertaking power reforms, encouragement for urban reforms and extension of the State Support Mission of NITI Aayog for another three years are all steps in this direction. Overall, a growth-oriented, balanced Budget which strengthens the foundations of the Indian economy, as it journeys towards the goal of a Viksit Bharat by 2047.

POCKET | RAVIKANTH

Tourism to go into mission mode

Up to 50 tourist destinations, app for tourists, and retail outlets for handicrafts to be developed, but the Budget allocation remains static at ₹2,400 crore; industry representatives disappointed with lack of announcement on infrastructure status for the sector

Sreeparna Chakrabarty
NEW DELHI

Up to 50 new tourist destinations will be developed; an information-driven app created for tourists and 'Unity Malls' will be set up in State capitals to showcase handicrafts and products with geographical indication (GI) status.

These are among the slew of measures announced in the Union Budget for promotion of tourism that will go into 'Mission Mode,' said Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman, as she presented the Budget.

There was, however, no increase in Budget allocation which remained at ₹2,400 crore.

These 50 destinations would be selected through a challenge, and developed as a complete package. The mobile app will provide tourist-friendly information like physical and virtual connectivity, and details on tourist guides, among others. A high standard of street food would be ensured, to enhance the tourist experience. The Budget also incentivised domestic tourism for the middle class, announcing sector-specific skilling and entrepreneurship development to achieve the objectives of the Dekho Apna Desh initiative.

Under the Vibrant Villages Programme, tourism infrastructure and amenities will be facilitated in border villages.

The Finance Minister said States will be encouraged to set up a Unity Mall in their capitals, or the most prominent tourism centre, or the financial capital. These malls would work towards the promotion and sale of each State's own ODOP (one district, one product) and other handicrafts. They would also provide space for such products of other States.

Tapping potential: The Union Budget also incentivises domestic tourism for the middle class. MANJUNATH H.S.

Large potential

"There is a large potential to be tapped in tourism. The sector holds huge opportunities for jobs and entrepreneurship for youth in particular," she said. Stakeholders in the tourism sector, however, had mixed reactions.

No infra status

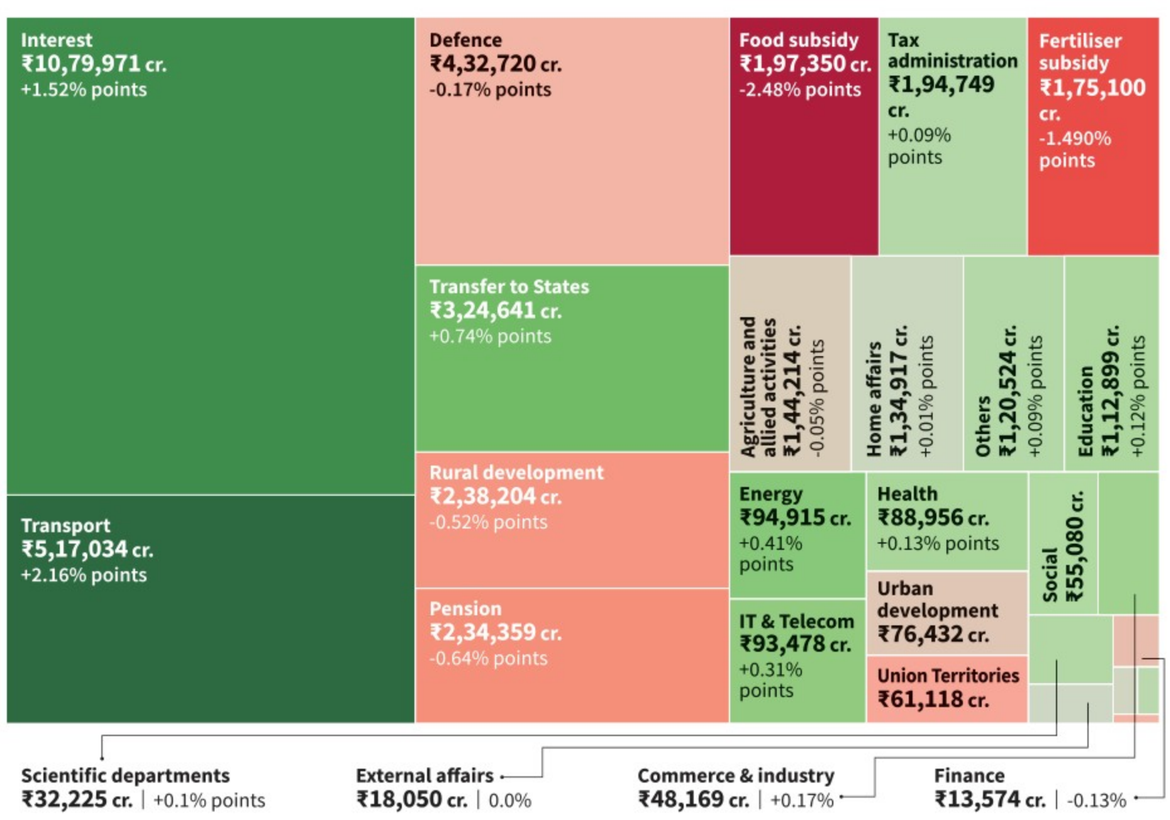
"While we are thankful that the Finance Minister has touched upon developing tourism on a mission mode along with destination development, the Indian tourism, travel and hospitality industry was keenly looking forward to getting the vital infrastructure status, to be treated at par with merchandise exports and to have gotten enhanced support to tourism for global marketing," Nakul Anand, Chairman, Federation of Associations in Indian Tourism and Hospitality (FAITH), said.

Rajiv Mehra, President, Indian Association of Tour Operators (IATO), said measures like development of tourism infrastructure at border villages and the development of 50 tourist destinations was very encouraging, as these would help in the growth of domestic and international tourism in India.

He, however, added, "None of our demands like rationalisation of GST on tourism industry, exemption of GST on foreign exchange earnings and refund of tax on shopping under Tax Refund to Tourist Scheme, for which there is already a provision in the GST Act, have been considered."

Budget break-up

The graphic shows the sector-wise budgeted expenditure (₹ crore) in FY24 — the bigger the square, the higher the expense. It also shows the change in a sector's share in total expenditure in FY24 from FY23 — green depicts an increase, red corresponds to a decrease. For instance, food subsidy fell by 2.48% points in FY24 while the total expense was ₹1,97,350 crore in FY24(BE)



SOURCE: BUDGET DOCUMENTS

Cooperative manufacturing units get sops

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman announced that new cooperatives that commence manufacturing activities before March 31, 2024, shall get the benefit of a lower tax rate of 15%, as is presently available to new manufacturing companies.

"Secondly, I propose to provide an opportunity to sugar cooperatives to claim payments made to sugarcane farmers for the period prior to assessment year 2016-17 as expenditure. This is expected to provide them with a relief of almost ₹10,000 crore," the Minister said.

TDS raised

She announced a higher limit of ₹2 lakh per member for cash deposits to and loans in cash by Primary Agricultural Cooperative Societies (PACS) and Primary Cooperative Agriculture and Rural Development Banks (PCARDBs) adding that a higher limit of ₹3 crore for tax deducted at source (TDS) on cash withdrawal is being provided to cooperative societies.

She said for small and marginal farmers, and other marginalised sections, the government is promoting cooperative-based economic development model. The government has already initiated computerisation of 63,000 PACS with an investment of ₹2,516 crore. In consultation with all stakeholders and States, model bye-laws for PACS were formulated enabling them to become multipurpose PACS. A national cooperative database is being prepared for countrywide mapping of cooperative societies.

'Decentralised storage'

"With this backdrop, we will implement a plan to set up massive decentralised storage capacity.

This will help farmers store their produce and realise remunerative prices through sale at appropriate times.

The government will also facilitate setting up of a large number of multipurpose cooperative societies, primary fishery societies and dairy cooperative societies in uncovered panchayats and villages in the next five years," she said.

Lauding the efforts, Union Home and Cooperation Minister Amit Shah said on Twitter that the decentralised storage capacity will play an important role in Prime Minister Narendra Modi's resolve to increase the income of farmers.

KYC process to be simplified, DigiLocker to be 'one-stop shop' for updating details

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

Financial institutions will be able to have a 'risk-based' know-your-customer (KYC) policy instead of a 'one-size-fits-all' one, Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman said while presenting the Union Budget 2023-24. "The financial sector regulators will also be encouraged to have a KYC system fully amenable to meet the needs of Digital India," she added. Businesses will be able to use their PAN as a common identifier across government platforms.

As for individuals, DigiLocker and Aadhaar will serve as a 'foundational identity,' from where changes in address or identity will be reflected across other platforms. Currently, updating one's Aadhaar doesn't, for example, update the address on their Income Tax portal registration. This announcement could mean that the government is working to synchronise citizen data across multiple portals when just the Aadhaar is updated.

"To enable more fintech innovative services, the scope of documents available in DigiLocker for individuals will be expanded," Ms. Sitharaman said.

Social security cuts irk trade unions

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

Allocations to the Labour Ministry and its social security schemes saw a dip in the Budget, and trade unions alleged that Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman had not addressed the issue of long-term employment and creation of quality jobs. The allocation to the Ministry of Labour slid from ₹16,893.68 crore in the last Budget estimates to ₹13,221.73 crore.

The Bima Yojana for Unorganised Workers, allocated ₹10 lakh last year, has been stopped. However, allocations to the Employees Pension Scheme, 1995, have risen.

Allocation of ₹7,000 cr. for phase 3 of eCourt will improve justice delivery system: Rijiju

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman allocated ₹7,000 crore for the introduction of Phase III of the eCourts Project that aims at efficient administration of justice.

Union Law Minister Kiren Rijiju, in a series of tweets, thanked Prime Minister Narendra Modi, the Finance Minister as well as Chief Justice of India D.Y. Chandrachud, who headed the eCommittee of the Supreme Court.

The Minister said Phase III of eCourts Project would build on the gains made by the earlier two phases that proved crucial in the delivery of justice during the COVID-19 pandemic when courts were under lockdown protocol.

"The project envisages various path-breaking initiatives like: Digital & Paperless Courts that aim to bring court proceedings under a digital format in a court, thereby limiting the use of paper and speeding up the disposal of cases, Online Court that focus on eliminating the presence of litigants or lawyers in the court, Expansion of scope of Virtual Courts beyond adjudication of Traffic Violations," he tweeted.

The Minister said the use of Artificial Intelligence and Machine Learning would allow for data analysis to work towards reducing pendency and understanding litigation patterns.

BUDGET 2023

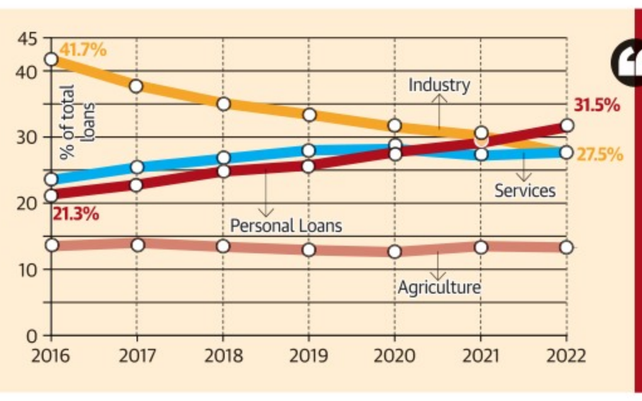
FMSpeak

"Capital investment outlay is being increased steeply for the third year in a row; this will be three times the outlay in 2019-20

Personal loans on the rise

Last year saw a major shift in the sectors which the banks funded. After many years, personal loans' share surpassed credit given to the industries. Just six years back, the share of industrial credit was almost twice that of personal loans given

Source: RBI



"The Budget reflects continuity in the govt. policies, be it pushing capex, controlling the fiscal deficit or focussing on inclusivity and capability

Srivats Ram, MD, Wheels India

VIEWPOINT

ASHOK HINDUJA
Chairman, Hinduja Group of Companies (India)

Budget 2023, target 2047

A good Budget with a credible set of imperatives that looks towards future

The ₹45-trillion-spending Budget 2023 announced by the Finance Minister on 1 February 2023 outlined the contours of the Indian economy. The noteworthy features of the Budget are:

Green energy transition

An outlay of ₹35,000 crores will be set aside to achieve energy transition and net zero objectives and energy security.

Inference: India is attempting to emerge as a green leader in the world.

Infrastructure and investment

The capital expenditure outlay for FY2023-24 has been hiked by 33% to ₹10 trillion

Inference: Investment cycle and job creation are to move in tandem.

Agriculture

There is an 11% hike in agriculture credit target to ₹20 lakh crore for the next fiscal, with a focus on animal husbandry, dairy, fisheries.

Iinference: Value-added agriculture is the next growth chapter.

Fintech

Budget proposals include fiscal support for digital public infrastructure and PM Vikas scheme to include access to digital payments and social security.

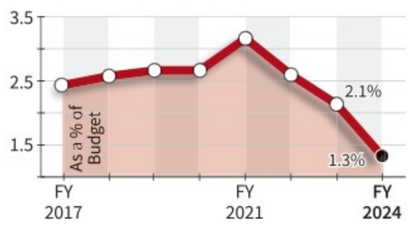
Inference: Ultimate goal is to create a digital economy for the entire nation.

Rural spending declines further

The charts show the allocation for various social sectors/schemes as a share of total budget expenditure. For instance, rural development share in total budget decreased from 5.8% to 5.3%

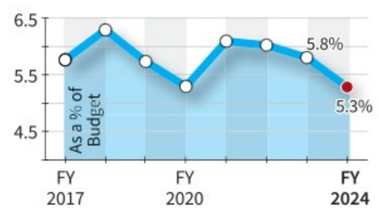
Allocation for MGNREGS

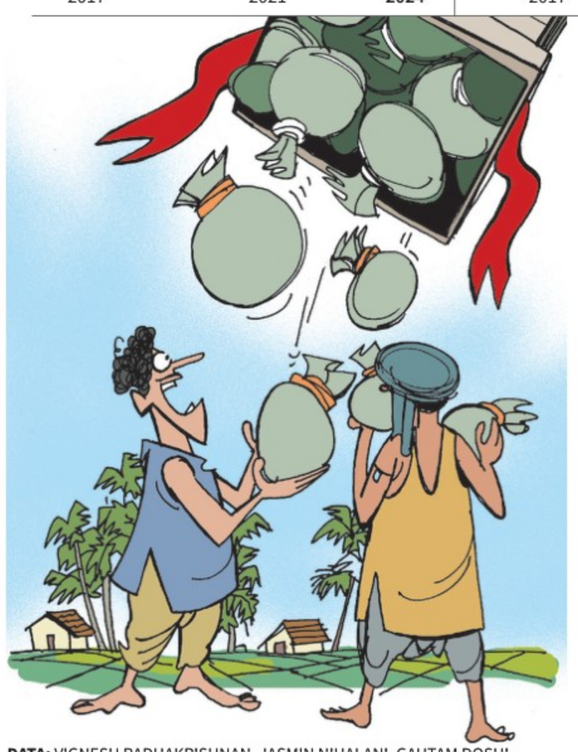
The share of funds allocated has decreased to 1.3% in FY24 from 2.1% in FY23



Allocation for rural development

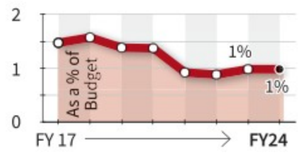
The share of funds allocated has decreased to 5.3% in FY24 from 5.8% in FY23





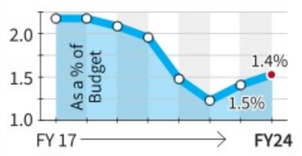
Allocation for higher education

The share of funds allocated has remained constant at 1%



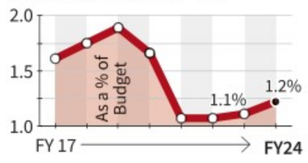
Allocation for school education

The share of funds has increased marginally to 1.5% in FY24



Allocation for social welfare

The share of funds has increased marginally to 1.2% in FY24



DATA: VIGNESH RADHAKRISHNAN, JASMIN NIHALANI, GAUTAM DOSHI, SRINIVASAN RAMANI | **GRAPHICS & DESIGN:** KANNAN SUNDAR, JOSEPH SATHEESH, A. GANESHAN, S.T. KARTHICK, L. BALAMURUGAN, RAJASEKHAR J.V.S.N, B. KARTHIKEYAN, J. ALBERT FRANCIS | **ILLUSTRATIONS:** SATHEESH VELLINEZHI, J.A. PREM KUMAR, R. RAJESH

Defence budget rises 13%; FY23 RE for pension rises

Capital expenditure for modernisation of military jumps 6.7% to ₹1.62 lakh cr.; FY23 revised estimates for pensions surged ₹33,719 cr.

Dinakar Peri
NEW DELHI

Fighting fit: The non-salary revenue outlay has risen by 44% to 90,000 crore in the Budget Estimates of 2023-24. FILE PHOTO

The Union Budget allocated ₹5.94 lakh crore for Defence, a 13% increase year-on-year from last year's Budget Estimates.

The non-salary revenue outlay has risen by 44% to ₹90,000 crore in the Budget Estimates of 2023-24. The hike is particularly significant given the huge increase in operational commitments, with major force accretion and sustenance along the Line of Actual Control (LAC), and stocking up of spares and ammunition since the 2020 stand-off with China.

"This will cater to sustenance of weapon systems and platforms, including ships and aircraft, and their logistics; boost fleet serviceability; emergency procurement of critical ammunition and spares; procuring and hiring of niche capabilities to mitigate capability gaps wherever required; progress stocking of military reserves; and strengthening forward defences, amongst others," the Defence Ministry said.

The overall revised estimates for 2022-23 for defence stood at ₹5.85 lakh crore and this year's allocation represents a 1.5% increase. The capital budget of the Border Roads Organisation (BRO) has gone up by 43% to ₹5,000 crore

The revised estimates of 2022-23 for pensions shot up by ₹33,719 crore to ₹1,53,415 crore following the Union Cabinet's approval for the revision of OROP scheme last December.

Department of Space gets 8% less than previous year at ₹12,500 cr.

The Hindu Bureau
CHENNAI

The expenditure of the Department of Space has been slashed by 8% in the 2023-24 Union Budget, down to ₹12,543.91 crore, from ₹13,700 crore in the previous Budget estimate. However this is 19% higher than the revised estimate from the last fiscal.

The biggest cut is for space technology, under 'Central Sector Schemes', of ₹1,093.84 crore. This header encompasses the expenditure of ISRO's various centres, including the Human Spaceflight Centre, as well as "developmental and operation projects" involving satellites and launch vehicles.

The allocation for the Semi-Conductor Laboratory, an autonomous body, has gone from ₹400 crore to zero, since the facility has been moved out from under the Department of Space as part of the India Semiconductor Mission.

Notably, the expenditure for space science, which includes the Indian Space Research Organisation's (ISRO) science missions such as Chandrayaan 3, Aditya L1, and its Climate and Atmospheric Programme, has received a nominal cut of 32% from the previous budget estimate.

Many science missions are already delayed on account of the COVID-19 pandemic and non-availability of launch vehicles thanks to low manufacturing output and commercial launch commitments.

Late January, ISRO chairman S. Somanath had said Aditya L1 is expected to launch around July 2023.

The INSAT satellite system has received a raise of ₹112 crore and is expected to generate a revenue of ₹445 crore in 2023-2024.

FM moots national digital library to promote reading

Jagriti Chandra
NEW DELHI

Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman has proposed a national digital library for children and adolescents along with strengthening of the National Book Trust, for building a "culture of reading" and to make up for pandemic-time learning losses.

She said the States would be encouraged to set up physical libraries at panchayat and ward levels, and provide infrastructure for accessing the National Digital Library resources. The National Book Trust, Children's Book Trust and other sources would be encouraged to provide and replenish non-curricular titles in regional languages and English, which could be used by the brick and mortar libraries set up by the States, she said.

Reading thrust: States would be encouraged to set up physical libraries at the panchayat and ward levels, says the FM. SRIRAM M.A.

The latest Annual Status of Education Report 2022 conducted by NGO Pratham showed that children's basic literacy had taken a big hit following closure of schools during COVID-19, with their reading ability as compared to numeracy skills worsening and falling to pre-2012 levels.

Funds for education up

Budgetary allocation for the Ministry of Education saw a total increase of 8.2% from ₹1,04,277 crore to ₹1,12,898 crore, of which school education saw a rise in allocation of 8.4% and higher education an expansion of 7.9%.

Another notable hike under school education was for Kendriya Vidyalaya Sangathan where the allocation went up from ₹7,650 crore to ₹8,363 crore – an increase of 9%.

The allocation for PM POSHAN scheme (mid-day meal scheme) rose by 13.35% from ₹10,233 crore to ₹11,600 crore.

Govt. to unveil National Data Governance Policy

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

"To unleash innovation and research by start-ups and academia, a National Data Governance Policy will be brought out," Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman said while presenting the Union Budget.

"This will enable access to anonymised data."

At a press conference, Union Minister for Railways and Electronics & Information Technology Ashwini Vaishnaw said the government wanted to wait for a personal data protection law to be in place before implementing non-personal data policy. "That is why, now that the digital personal data protection bill is already there, industry, all stakeholders have accepted it. So, with these two complementary constructs in place, it's time to go forward."

PUBLIC NOTICE

The General public are hereby notified that, our clients have agreed to purchase the Schedule Property from its Owner **SMT.VIJAYA DHARIWAL** W/o Sri.S.Ashok Kumar Dhariwal (Ashok S Dhariwal), residing in the Schedule Property. The Owner represents that she is the absolute owner of the Schedule Property and has freehold marketable, right, title and interest therein.

Apart from the above owner, if any person has any manner of claim, right, title, interest or demand of any nature in or over the Schedule Property or any part thereof, the same shall be filed with the undersigned with supporting documents, within **10 (ten) days** from the date of this Notice. Objections and or the claims received after expiry of the stipulated period will not be binding on our clients.

SCHEDULE

All that piece and parcel of the residential property bearing **Municipal No.8/32** (Old No.41, prior to that No.B5/41, prior to that No.34 and the portion of the property known as 'Chandra Vilas'), **PID No.49-6-8/32**, measuring on the Eastern side 45 feet; on the Western side 53 feet; on the Northern side 105 feet and on the Southern side 105 feet, in all measuring 5145 Sq.ft, **situated at Bull Temple Road** (earlier known as Basaveswara Temple Road), Basavangudi, Bengaluru, within the administrative jurisdiction of BBMP Ward No.142 (K.G.Nagar) and bounded as follows:

East by : Private Property
West by : Property of Sri.N.Mahadevan
North by : Private Property
South by : Property of Sri.N.Sadasivan and 30 feet wide common Road

Sd/- Bayya Reddy. M
For ISHA LAW CHAMBERS LLP
Advocates & Solicitors
No.101, Sri Manjunatha Complex, 4th Floor, 22nd Main Road, BSK 2nd Stage, Opp : Banashankari BDA Complex, Bengaluru-560070.

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BANGALORE WATER SUPPLY AND SEWERAGE BOARD

INVITATION FOR TENDERS (Only Through e-procurement Portal)

BWSSB invites Tenders from Registered Agencies for the following works.

Office of the Chief Engineer (East), 6th Floor, Cauvery Bhavan, KG Road, Bengaluru-560009.

Sl No.	Division	IFT Number		Amount put to tender / EMD (In Rs.)	Last date & time for Submission of Tender	Date & time for Opening of Tender
1	East-1	BWSSB/EE(East)-1/PB/2481/ 2022-23 Date: 30.01.2023 - **(3rd Call)**		Rs. 11,81,380/- / Rs. 29,535/-	16.02.2023 upto 4.00 pm	17.02.2023 after 5.00 pm

Sd/- Executive Engineer (East)-1

Office of the Chief Engineer (West), 6th Floor, Cauvery Bhavan, KG Road, Bengaluru-560009.

2	North West-1	BWSSB/EE(NW-1)/PB/3241 /2022-23 Date: 30.01.2023 **(2nd Call)**	1	Rs. 7,82,610/- / Rs. 19,600/-	09.02.2023 upto 5.30 pm	10.02.2023 after 3.00 pm
3			2	Rs. 5,16,197/- / Rs. 13,000/-		
4			3	Rs. 23,67,799/- / Rs. 47,400/-		
5		BWSSB/EE(NW-1)/PB/3241 /2022-23 Date: 30.01.2023 **Reserved For ST Category (2nd Call)**	4	Rs. 49,74,246/- / Rs. 49,800/-		
6		BWSSB/EE(NW-1)/PB/3241 /2022-23 Date: 30.01.2023 **Reserved For SC Category (2nd Call)**	5	Rs. 16,06,347/- / Rs. 20,100/-		

Sd/- Executive Engineer (North West-1)

7	North West-2	BWSSB/EE(NW-2)/TO/PB/ 2245/2022-23 Date: 01.02.2023	Rs. 55,54,423/- / Rs. 1,11,100/-	09.02.2023 upto 4.00 pm	10.02.2023 after 4.30 pm
8			Rs. 51,47,338/- / Rs. 1,03,000/-		

Sd/- Executive Engineer (North West-2)

Office of the Chief Engineer (North), 2nd Floor, Cauvery Bhavan, KG Road, Bengaluru-560009.

9	Central	BWSSB/EE(C)/PB/2806/ 2022-23 Date: 01.02.2023	Rs. 13,36,546/- / Rs. 33,450/-	09.02.2023 upto 5.00 pm	10.02.2023 after 5.01 pm
10		BWSSB/EE(C)/PB/2808/ 2022-23 Date: 01.02.2023	Rs. 31,47,730/- / Rs. 63,000/-		
11		BWSSB/EE(C)/PB/2810/ 2022-23 Date: 01.02.2023	Rs. 17,62,865/- / Rs. 44,100/-		
12		BWSSB/EE(C)/PB/2812/ 2022-23 Date: 01.02.2023	Rs. 36,21,909/- / Rs. 72,450/-		

Sd/- Executive Engineer (Central)

Office of the Chief Engineer (Design & QA), 9th Floor, Cauvery Bhavan, KG Road, Bengaluru-560009.

13	Design -Civil & BM	BWSSB/EE(DC&BM)/PB/3321 2022-23 Date: 25.01.2023	Rs. 76,80,193/- / Rs. 1,53,603/-	09.02.2023 upto 4.00 pm	13.02.2023 at 12.00 pm
14		BWSSB/EE(DC&BM)/PB/3351 2022-23 Date: 30.01.2023 **(6th Call)**	Rs. 81,88,300/- / Rs. 1,63,766/-		

Sd/- Executive Engineer (Design) Civil & BM

The Details regarding the tender and participation in the e-procurement portal process can be obtained by logging on to **http://eproc.karnataka.gov.in** For further details contact the above signed office during working hours.

DIPR/CP/4426/Zenkar/2022-23

BUDGET 2023

FMSpeak

"All cities and towns will be enabled for 100% mechanical desludging of septic tanks and sewers

Some sectors still not out of woods

Gross value added in mining and manufacturing sectors, revived in Q2FY22 from pandemic blues, only to decelerate again in Q2FY23, while growth in service-based activities like trading, hotels, transport, communication and broadcasting services continued to accelerate. Table shows y-o-y% increase in GVA

Source: CMIE

Quarter	Agri	Mining	Manufacturing	Utilities	Construction	Service	Real estate	Public admin.
FY18 Q2	6.8	3.4	8.7	11.2	1.7	10.8	-0.6	7.1
FY19 Q2	4.4	-2.9	5.4	9.6	5.6	7.1	6.8	7.5
FY20 Q2	4.7	-3.9	-3.5	1.9	0.7	6.4	8.3	6.8
FY21 Q2	3.2	-7.9	5.2	-3.2	-6.6	-18.9	-5.3	-10.2
FY22 Q2	3.2	14.5	5.6	8.5	8.1	9.6	6.1	19.5
FY23 Q2	4.6	-2.8	-4.3	5.6	6.6	14.7	7.2	6.5

"The 2023 Budget is a growth-oriented and inclusive one that lays a solid foundation and strengthens the economic outlook for India

Arundhati Bhattacharya, *Chairperson and CEO, Salesforce India*

VIEWPOINT

T.T. SRINIVASARAGHAVAN
Chairman-emeritus, Finance Industry Development Council

Choosing the path of prudence

This Budget must rank as the best that the Finance Minister has delivered in her five-year tenure

"The number of economists in India on January 31 is 842, on February 1, it's 2,87,329... on Feb. 2, it rises to 3,34,569 and on Feb. 3, it is back to 842!" says a WhatsApp message doing the rounds. I certainly do not count myself in that number. It is in my capacity as a long-time student and watcher of the Indian economy that I offer my comments.

At first blush, the Finance Minister appears to have waved a magic wand. The key priority areas of infrastructure, agriculture, digitisation, green initiatives, ease of doing business and, importantly, personal taxation have received the desired focus. All while staying within the boundaries of fiscal prudence. With major State elections and the 2024 general election looming, the temptation to go the populist route must have been compelling. It is to her credit that she has chosen the path of prudence and continuity.

The increased outlays of ₹10 lakh crore for infrastructure and ₹2.4 lakh crore for the Railways are particularly noteworthy and demonstrate the government's continuing commitment towards building world-class roads, ports, airports and modern railway networks. These proposals are likely to have significant downstream benefits, not least in terms of employment creation. Equally, the nuanced approach towards agriculture, focussing on technology and digital initiatives rather than freebies and subsidies, is to be welcomed. The objective of facilitating one crore farmers to adopt natural farming over the next three years is indeed laudable.

The increased outlays show the government's commitment towards building world-class facilities

Several proposals have been unveiled to support the crucial, yet often neglected, MSME sector, which is rightly described as the backbone of our economy. The various reliefs, including the revamped credit guarantee scheme, will go a long way in alleviating the pain of MSMEs that bore the brunt of the pandemic-induced slowdown.

Unsurprisingly, it is the direct tax proposals that have grabbed the most attention. While these changes were perhaps overdue, the Finance Minister has sent out a clear message that the era of exemptions is drawing to a close. What implications this will have for middle class savers remain to be seen. Traditionally, certain insurance and mutual fund products have been viewed primarily as tax-saving devices rather than as savings avenues. Will the new tax regime turn people away from their favourite Section 80C (of the Income Tax Act) havens? Only time will tell.

As always, experts will analyse the fine print and the proverbial devil in the detail will emerge. Initial euphoria will turn to gloom. There will be those that rejoice and others that lament. But isn't this the annual Budget circus that we all eagerly look forward to in February, year after year?

Given the conflicting pressures exerted by the vagaries and complexities of the global economic landscape and the political compulsions during an election-filled year, this Budget must rank as the best that the Finance Minister has delivered in her five-year tenure.

POCKET | RAVIKANTH

"Congrats, we've enhanced the number of calls you get from us by 25 per cent!"

MGNREGS fund cut by 33% to ₹60,000 cr.

Activists accuse the Centre of 'killing the law', noting that the allocation does not even meet the minimum threshold and should have been doubled from the current ₹60,000 crore, merely to provide eligible households with 40 days of work instead of the legally guaranteed 100

Sobhana K. Nair
NEW DELHI

In line with the recent trend of slashing the allocation for its flagship rural jobs scheme, the Union Budget allocated only ₹60,000 crore for the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGS) for 2023-24. That is 18% lower than the ₹73,000-crore budgetary estimates for the scheme for the current year, and 33% lower than the ₹89,000-crore revised estimates.

In the previous Budget presented by Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman, the allocation saw a 25% cut to ₹73,000 crore. Left with a spiralling unpaid balance at the end of the year, the Rural Development Ministry demanded an additional ₹25,000 crore to meet the shortfall in the scheme. The Finance Ministry only approved ₹16,000 crore, taking the revised Budget for this financial year to ₹89,000 crore.

Thread of hope: Villagers of Kumkhal in Odisha on their way home from MGNREGA work in September 2022. BISWARANJAN ROUT

Despite the higher revised estimates, less than 3% of the households employed under the MGNREGS completed the 100 days of work they are legally entitled to. As *The Hindu* reported on January 26, the average days of employment provided per household is at a five-year low in this financial year. Till January 20, the average days of employment provided per household was only 42, while it ranged between 48 and 52 in the preceding four years.

'Killing the law'

On the eve of the Union Budget, a consortium of activists and academics working under the umbrella group of the Peoples' Action for Employment Guarantee and the NREGA Sangarsh Morcha said that to provide the legally guaranteed 100 days of work to all eligible households in the current year, the scheme required an allocation of ₹2.72 lakh crore. According to their calculations, even giving each active household just 40 days of work would require ₹1.24 lakh crore, more than double the current allocation.

"Such a low allocation is clearly aimed at killing the law. This allocation does not meet even the minimum threshold. And you have to remember that even the revised estimate of ₹89,000 crore is after completely excluding West Bengal, which till the previous years had got 10% of the total MGNREGS Budget," Nikhil Dey, founder of Mazdoor Kisan Shakti Sangathan, said.

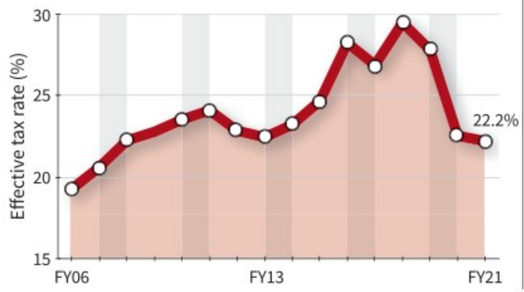
The Congress general secretary for communications and former Rural Development Minister, Jairam Ramesh, expressed dismay at the sharp cut. "Even assuming MGNREGS is demand-driven, the cut is rather savage. But it is in line with the government's steps to keep demand itself suppressed," he told *The Hindu*.

Kerala Rural Development Minister and CPI(M) leader M.B. Rajesh called this "drastic reduction" a "brutal surgical strike on the poor" which reflects the government's "anti-poor" slant. "The current Budget allocation is less than one-fourth of what the country needs. The Narendra Modi government shouldn't forget that it was MGNREGA that helped in staving off starvation during the pandemic years," Mr. Rajesh said.

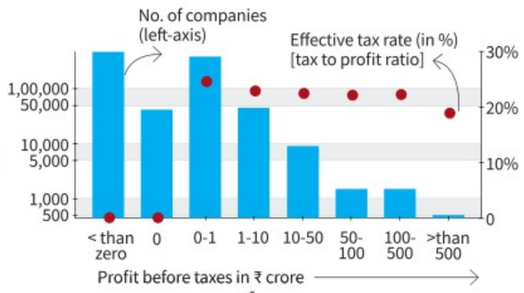
Skewing towards the rich

In FY21, companies with a higher share in profits, incurred lower effective tax rates. As many as 517 companies which made profits of over ₹500 crore had the lowest effective tax rate

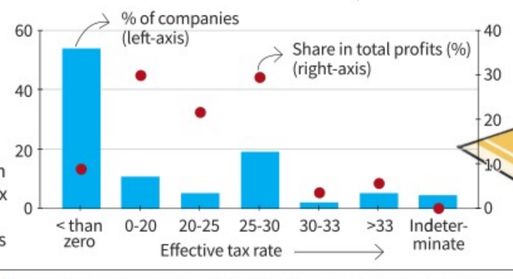
Downward trend: The chart shows the effective tax rate for all companies reporting a profit. The effective tax rate reduced from 22.5% in FY20 to 22.2% in FY21. It has been on a declining trend since the corporate tax rates were slashed

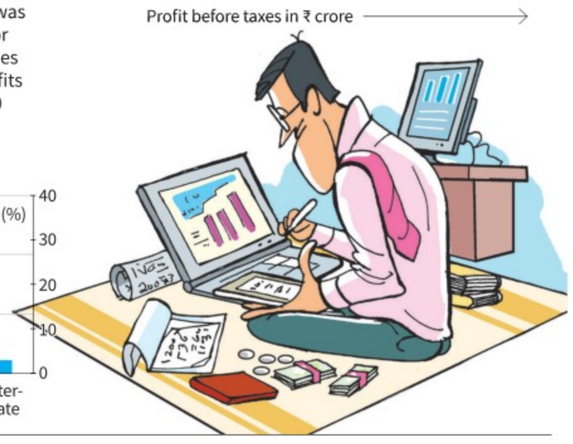


Profit before tax rates: Firms which made the highest profits (> ₹500 crore) had the least effective tax rate while the tax rate was higher for companies with profits upto ₹10 crore

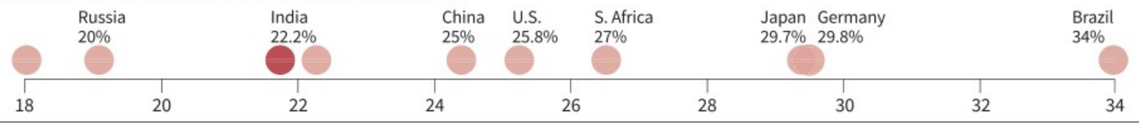


Effective rates: A relatively lower effective tax rate was paid by firms having a relatively larger share in profits. Firms which paid an effective tax rate upto 25% had 52% share in profits





Global snapshot: As per the latest available data, Brazil's corporate tax rate of 34% was among the highest globally. Among BRICS countries, Russia has the lowest corporate tax rate of 20%



19.6% hike in sum to Ministry of AYUSH; allocation to Ayurveda institute doubles

The Hindu Bureau
CHENNAI

The Ministry of AYUSH (MoAYUSH) has received a nominal increase of 19.6% in the Union Budget, a sum of ₹3,647.5 crore as against the previous Budget estimate of ₹3,050 crore. This is far higher than the Ministry's previous hike of 2.6%.

The Ministry of AYUSH is responsible for promoting education and research in Indian systems of medicine (Ayurveda, Yoga and naturopathy, Unani, Siddha and Homeopathy).

Central sector schemes under the Ministry have received ₹185.44 crore, down from ₹306.98 in the previous term.

The bulk of the cuts was for financial assistance to hospitals, to promote medical tourism, and to promote "international cooperation".

The Institute for Teaching and Research in Ayurveda, which was set up to popularise Ayurveda and also offers degree courses, has had its allocation nearly doubled, to ₹150.13 crore.

Autonomous bodies under the Ministry including the Central Councils for Research in Ayurvedic Sciences and for Research in Homeopathy, have received trivial hikes.

Funds for minority schemes slashed by 38% from last year's

Ishita Mishra
NEW DELHI

The Budget allocation for the Ministry of Minority Affairs was reduced by 38% for the financial year 2023-24 to the year 2022-23. Several scholarship and skill development schemes got major fund cuts including the merit-cum means scholarship for professional and technical courses for students from minority communities. The schemes have been allotted funds of ₹44 crore this year, while the Budget for the same was ₹365 crore last year.

The Finance Ministry has also slashed the funds for the pre-matric scholarship for minorities for the financial year 2023-24 by over ₹900 crore. The scholarship funds in the last Budget were ₹1,425 crore, which is reduced to ₹433 crore this year.

The funds for post-matric scholarship, however, have been increased from ₹515 crore to ₹1,065 crore.

The total allocation of the Budget for education empowerment for minorities which was ₹2,515 crore last year is reduced to ₹1,689 crore this year.

The Budget for research schemes for minorities too has been slashed to ₹20 crore from ₹41 crore last year. In a massive fund cut, the Education Scheme for Madrasas and Minorities has been allocated ₹10 crore for the financial year 2023-24. The same is 93% less than the Budget allocation of 2022-23, which was ₹160 crore.

"The objective is to develop socio-economic infrastructure in the identified Minority Concentration Areas

JAWED A. KHAN
Centre for Budget and Governance Accountability

Quality of life

Jawed A. Khan from the Centre for Budget and Governance Accountability told *The Hindu* that the Budget allocation for the Pradhan Mantri Jan Vikas Karyakram (PMJVK) is reduced massively this year.

The Budget for PMJVK was ₹1,650 crore last year which is reduced to ₹600 crore this year.

"The objective of the Scheme is to develop socio-economic infrastructure and basic amenities in the identified Minority Concentration Areas for improving the quality of life of the people and reduce imbalances," he said.

Centre pitches for 100% switch to mechanised sewer cleaning

Abhinay Lakshman
NEW DELHI

Coming in with a nearly ₹100-crore allocation in this year's Budget for the newly named NAMASTE (National Action Plan for Mechanised Sanitation Ecosystem) scheme, Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman on Wednesday said the Union government was looking to enable 100% mechanical desludging of septic tanks and sewers in all cities and towns.

Better model: Mechanised cleaning of sewers being done in Mysuru City Corporation. FILE PHOTO

Ms. Sitharaman, in her Union Budget 2023-24 speech, said this task was being undertaken "to transition from manhole to machine-hole mode", adding, "Enhanced focus will be provided for scientific management of dry and wet waste."

The NAMASTE scheme was launched last year, subsuming the already existing Self Employment Scheme for Rehabilitation of Manual Scavengers (SRMS), with Ministry officials saying that since manual scavenging (humans collecting human waste by hand) was no longer practised in India, the next goal was to eliminate hazardous cleaning of sewers and septic tanks.

As part of the NAMASTE scheme, the guidelines for which are close to being finalised, the Social Justice Ministry intends to first enumerate the number of people engaged in hazardous cleaning of sewers and septic tanks across 500 AMRUT (Atal Mission for Rejuvenation and Urban Transformation) cities and then proceed with its plans. In this year's Budget, the Social Justice Ministry has allocated ₹97.41 crore for the NAMASTE scheme, with no allocation for the SRMS programme. The NAMASTE scheme, among other things, provides for capital subsidies to sewer cleaners on the purchase of sanitation machinery, training of workers, and loan subsidies on sanitation equipment.

BUDGET 2023

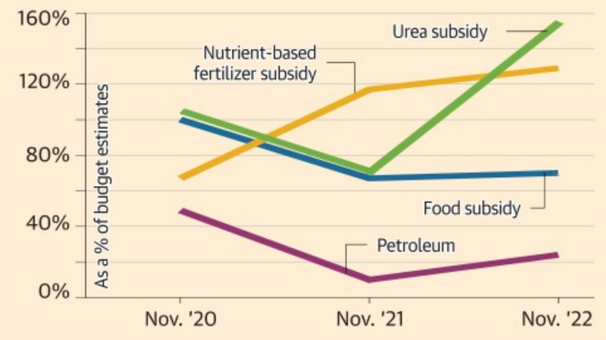
FMSpeak

"We will set up a massive decentralised storage capacity; this will help farmers store their produce and realise remunerative prices

Subsidy surge

Considering the rise in fertilizer prices in the global market, the Centre had decided to raise the fertilizer subsidy for the rabi season too. By November 2022, subsidies provided for nutrient-based fertilizers and urea had reached 129% and 154% of the budget estimates for FY23

Source: Controller General of Accounts



"A Budget driven majorly by capex; every rupee spent on capex has a multiplier of ₹3 as against ₹0.9 for revenue expenditure

Anish Shah,
MD & CEO, Mahindra Group

VIEWPOINT

KUMAR MANGALAM BIRLA
Chairman, Aditya Birla Group

Much-needed boost to agriculture

Priority for capital expenditure, green growth, improvement in health care and education sector

The Union Budget 2023-24 is a bold step towards envisioning a prosperous and inclusive India. One of the key pillars of the Indian economy remains agriculture. And the Budget has provided a much-needed boost to agriculture and allied sectors. The proposed unique and innovative approaches will increase farmer incomes and promote rural development. Among various initiatives that the Finance Minister has announced, the most far-reaching is the proposal to provide new age technology and digital platforms for farmers and rural entrepreneurs. This will ensure better access to farm inputs, credit, and insurance. Digitisation will help increase productivity by improving crop estimation, and market intelligence. These initiatives will surely strengthen the agri-tech industry and start-ups by providing not just adequate funds, but also technology support.

The Budget outlines a bold, comprehensive and inclusive strategy that ensures prosperity to all

Another important initiative is to make India the global hub for Millets - 'Shree Anna'. India is already the largest producer and exporter of millets and the focused approach will further deepen our presence in the world. The proposed agriculture credit budgeted at ₹20 lakh crore for allied sectors such as animal husbandry, dairy and fisheries will ensure increased income for the rural population. Beyond agriculture, the Union Budget has key proposals such as the thrust on capital expenditure, green growth, improvement in healthcare and education sector and rationalisation of taxes. The Budget has proposed a 33% increase in capital expenditure to ₹10 lakh crore, accounting for almost 3.3% of GDP. The Railways will take a substantial share of the capital expenditure. The Budget outlines a bold, comprehensive and inclusive strategy that ensures prosperity for all. It also sets the foundation for India's *Amrit Kaal*.

Major thrust planned for green energy

₹35,000 crore has been earmarked for priority capital investment; off-grid solar projects, which constitute less than 5% of the solar power target, to get ₹360 crore; customs duty waived on capital goods and machinery for lithium-ion battery manufacturing

Jacob Koshy
NEW DELHI

Underlining a commitment to accelerate the Indian economy's transition to green energy, Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman in her Budget speech on Wednesday mentioned a slew of schemes aimed at promoting clean energy and sustainable living.

She said green energy was among the *Saptarishi* or seven guiding lights that would steer India through *Amrit Kaal* (next 25 years).

She said the Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas had earmarked ₹35,000 crore for "priority capital investment", though neither her speech nor the Budget documents provided more clarity on it.

Green energy is among the 'Saptarishis' that will steer India through 'Amrit Kaal' (next 25 years), says Finance Minister. AP

The Budget also waived customs duty on capital goods and machinery for lithium-ion battery manufacturing. The move is expected to make electric vehicles and storage systems cheaper.

The Ministry of New and Renewable Energy has received a budgetary allocation of ₹10,222 crore, a 45% increase from ₹7,033 crore it expects to spend this financial year. The most significant increase in the Ministry's programmes are for 'off-grid' solar projects, on which the government is expected to spend ₹61 crore in the current fiscal but has budgeted ₹360 crore for the coming financial year.

India had a target of installing 100 gigawatts (GW) of solar power projects by 2022, but has only installed 63 GW. Off-grid solar projects constitute less than 5% of the target.

The allocation for solar power expected to be supplied to the grid has been raised to ₹4,970 crore, up from the ₹3,469 crore expected to be spent by March 2023.

The National Green Hydrogen Mission, a ₹19,000-crore programme to produce, use and supply hydrogen from renewable energy sources, has been allocated ₹297 crore.

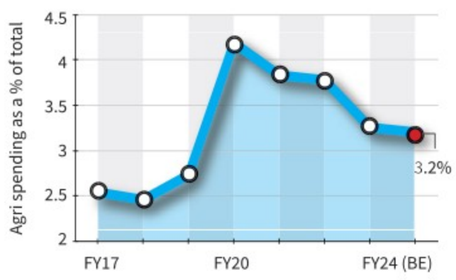
"For the budget allocation of ₹35,000 crore (about $4 billion) to start catalysing the nearly $30 billion in energy transition finance required annually by India for its net zero future, three types of measures will be needed: risk guarantees to reduce the cost of capital for low-carbon investments in the country; demand aggregation measures as has been done for LED lighting and electric buses; and viability gap financing for hydrogen electrolysers and offshore wind as announced for battery storage," Ulka Kelkar, director, World Resources Institute, said in a statement.

Ms. Sitharaman mentioned a "green credit" programme to be notified under the Environment (Protection) Act. "Building on India's success in afforestation, the Mangrove Initiative for Shoreline Habitats and Tangible Incomes will be taken up for mangrove plantation along the coastline and on salt pan lands," she added.

Agri allocation stagnates, concerns remain

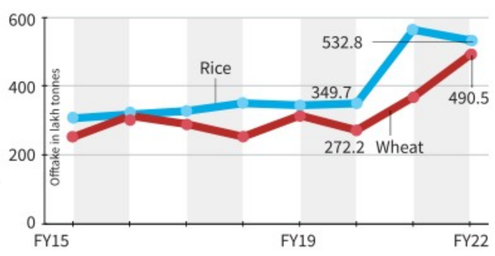
Allocation for agriculture remained stagnant in FY24, while sowing declined due to climate issues. Grain offtake surged during COVID-19 resulting in low stocks of rice and wheat in public godowns

Agriculture allocation stagnant
In FY24 (BE), allocation to the agriculture and allied activities remained stagnant at 3.2% of the total budget expenditure. In FY23 it formed 3.25% of total expenses. The share peaked in FY20 at 4.2% and since then it has been declining

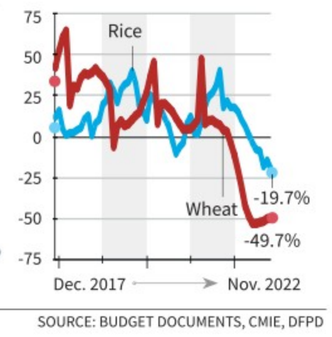


■ Grain offtake surged due to PMGKAY, other food subsidy schemes. Rice, wheat offtake increased by over 50 & 80% respectively between FY20 & FY22

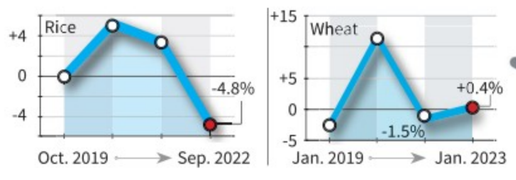
Record offtake: While the sowing remained low, offtake of rice and wheat touched record-highs after the pandemic



Plunging stocks: The stock levels of rice and wheat with FCI touched their lowest levels in at least five years. The chart shows the y-o-y % change in the monthly stock level of rice and wheat with the FCI



Sowing declines: A look at y-o-y % change in the area sown for rice and wheat during the kharif and rabi seasons shows area sown under rice and wheat has declined or remained low for past two seasons



SOURCE: BUDGET DOCUMENTS, CMIE, DFPD

Cut in allocations to farm schemes, food subsidy draws flak

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The Union Budget, presented by Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman here on Wednesday, announced a number of measures for the agriculture sector, including an increase in the credit target to ₹20 lakh crore, with focus on animal husbandry, dairy and fisheries. The allocations for the sector, such as the food subsidy, however, saw a drastic fall inviting criticism from farmers' organisations.

The Finance Minister introduced "digital public infrastructure for agriculture" in the Budget.

Another step, the 'Agriculture Accelerator Fund', she said, will encourage agri start-ups by young entrepreneurs in rural areas.

The All India Kisan Sabha (AIKS) said the narrative built around free ration allocation under the Pradhan Mantri Gareeb Kalyan Yojana replacing the pandemic time additional foodgrain scheme, in actual is a farce given the decrease in allocation for the food subsidy now.

Science & Technology Ministry allocation up by 15% at ₹16,361 crore

Vasudevan Mukunth
CHENNAI

The Ministry of Science & Technology has received an allocation of ₹16,361.42 crore in the Union Budget, a nominal increase of 15% from the previous Budget estimate. Between 2021-22 and 2022-23, the Ministry had received a 3.9% decrease.

The bulk of the hike has gone to the Department of Science and Technology (DST), which has received ₹7,931.05 crore, up 32.1% from last year.

The Ministry of Science & Technology had an important part to play during the COVID-19 pandemic, especially supporting research and innovation on vaccines, medical devices, and drugs.

Apart from the DST, it includes the Department of Biotechnology (DBT), which received ₹2,683.86 crore, a nominal hike of 3.9%, and the Department of Scientific and Industrial Research (DSIR), which received ₹5,746.51 crore (1.9%).

Most of the DST's increase comes from a ₹2,000 crore allocation to the National Research Foundation.

The government announced this entity in 2021 with an outlay of ₹50,000 crore over five years to "strengthen the governance structure of the research-related institutions and [to] improve linkages between R&D, academia, and industry".

BIRAC gets 40% cut

The Biotechnology Industry Research Assistance Council (BIRAC) under the DBT, an implementing body under the government's 'Mission COVID Suraksha' in 2020 to develop COVID-19 vaccines and augment vaccine manufacturing, has received a 40% cut.

The Ministry of Earth Sciences has received ₹3,319.88 crore, a hike of 25.11%. While high, this is relatively lower than the previous hike of 40%.

These Ministries and departments are together responsible for promoting, supporting, and translating research in the country and its applications in various sectors. India's gross expenditure on research and development (GERD), which includes State government and private-sector investments, has been steadily declining since 2009-2010, making higher public sector investment in R&D a longstanding demand of the national research community.

Cluster-based approach for ELS cotton production

The Hindu Bureau
COIMBATORE

Production of Extra Long Staple (ELS) cotton, which is largely imported now, is all set to get an impetus as the government proposes a cluster-based and value-chain approach through public private partnerships.

The Union Budget is looking at better collaboration between farmers, State, and industry for input supplies, extension services and market linkages to increase ELS cotton productivity. An official of the Ministry added that ELS cotton now had separate HS code.

Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman also said in the Budget speech on Wednesday that traditional artisans and craftspeople, who work with their hands using tools, were generally referred to as *Vishwakarma*. The new scheme would enable the artisans to improve the quality, scale up, and integrate with the MSME value chain," she said.

For the textiles and apparel sector, the Budget proposes allocation of ₹ 900 crore for Amended Technology Upgradation Fund Scheme (ATUFS) for 2023-2024 as against ₹650 crore for 2022-2023. This will be to settle subsidy claims registered under ATUFS till March 31, 2022 and liabilities of previous versions of Technology Upgradation Fund Scheme. There would be no new sanction during 2023-2024, said officials.

Sundram Fasteners Limited
CIN: L35999TN1962PLC004943
Registered & Corporate Office: 98-A, VII Floor, Dr. Radhakrishnan Salai, Mylapore, Chennai - 600 004
Tel: +91 - 44 - 28478500 | Fax: 91 - 44 - 28478510
Email: investorshelpdesk@sfl.co.in | Website: www.sundram.com

STATEMENT OF UNAUDITED STANDALONE AND CONSOLIDATED FINANCIAL RESULTS FOR THE QUARTER AND NINE MONTHS ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2022

(₹ in Crores)

Sl. No.	Particulars	Standalone			Consolidated		
		Quarter ended	Nine months ended	Quarter ended	Quarter ended	Nine months ended	Quarter ended
		31.12.2022	31.12.2022	31.12.2021	31.12.2022	31.12.2022	31.12.2021
		(Unaudited)			(Unaudited)		
1	Total Revenue from Operations	1,226.87	3,684.70	1,024.25	1,403.03	4,214.80	1,207.53
2	Net Profit for the period (before tax)	142.05	462.60	138.48	156.50	493.06	147.06
3	Net Profit for the period (after tax)	106.13	347.99	103.34	118.07	372.88	110.00
4	Total Comprehensive Income for the period [Comprising Profit for the period (after tax) and Other Comprehensive Income (after tax)]	115.72	359.04	102.86	134.98	384.64	112.83
5	Equity Share Capital (Face Value of Re 1/- each fully paid up)	21.01	21.01	21.01	21.01	21.01	21.01
6	Earnings Per Share (EPS) (for continuing and discontinued operations) (Face value of Re 1/- each) (not annualised) (in Rs.)						
	(a) Basic	5.05	16.56	4.91	5.57	17.53	5.15
	(b) Diluted	5.05	16.56	4.91	5.57	17.53	5.15

Notes:
1 The above is an extract of the detailed format of the standalone and consolidated financial results filed with the Stock Exchanges under Regulation 33 of the SEBI (Listing Obligations and Disclosure Requirements) Regulations, 2015. The full format of the Financial Results are available on the Stock Exchange websites, www.bseindia.com and www.nseindia.com and on the Company's website www.sundram.com.
2 The Statutory Auditors have carried out a limited review for the quarter and nine months ended December 31, 2022 and have issued an unmodified report thereon.

Place : Chennai
Date : February 1, 2023

For Sundram Fasteners Limited
Sd/-
Chairman

BUDGET 2023

FMSpeak

A capital outlay of ₹2.4 lakh crore has been provided for the Railways; this highest-ever outlay is about 9 times the outlay made in 2013-14

Road to recovery

The chart plots the allocation to the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways as a percentage of total expenditure. The share has increased drastically in this Budget to 6% of the total expenditure. Between FY17 and FY21, the share remained between 2.6% and 3.3% of the total expenditure

Source: Budget documents

> *The Budget gives something to everyone. It is about inclusive growth and building on the recovery we are seeing after the pandemic*
>
> **Sudarshan Venu,** *MD, TVS Motors*

Railways gets outlay of ₹2.4 lakh crore

Ashwini Vaishnaw says the higher outlay will be used to ramp up production of Vande Bharat trains, which will now be manufactured at Sonipat, Rae Bareli and Latur, apart from Chennai; he says operating ratio of the utility has stabilised at 98.22% against 107.39% in 2021-22

Maitri Porecha
NEW DELHI

With an outlay of ₹2.4 lakh crore for the financial year 2023-24 compared to ₹1.4 lakh crore in 2022-23, Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman, in her Budget speech on Wednesday, said that the outlay for the Railways was nine times the amount provided in 2013-14. The Railway Ministry was able to spend ₹1.35 lakh crore in 2021-22, Budget documents note.

Railway Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw said that because of less allocation to the Railways in the past, the true potential of the sector had not been achieved. "The current outlay will be beneficial for 800 crore passengers who annually travel by the Railways," Mr. Vaishnaw said.

A view of Vande Bharat coaches being produced at Integral Coach Factory in Chennai. R. RAGU

The higher outlay, he said, will be used to ramp up production of Vande Bharat trains, which will now be manufactured from four sites, as opposed to the existing one site in Chennai. "Sonipat in Haryana, Rae Bareli in U.P., and Latur in Maharashtra will be added as manufacturing sites," he said.

Mr. Vaishnaw said, "Eight Vande Bharat trains have now covered an equivalent of travelling 52 times along the perimeter of the earth. So we now know that the product is well tested and stabilised. It is now time to ramp up supply chain and production. Currently we manufacture one Vande Bharat train in seven days. We want to ramp this up to two to three trains every week."

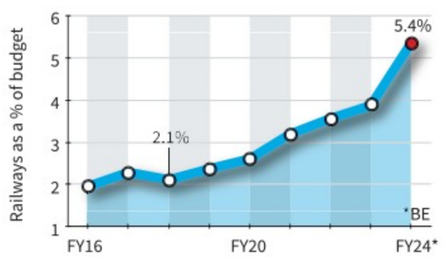
Mr. Vaishnaw said operating ratio of the Railways has stabilised at 98.22% against 107.39% in 2021-22. Operating ratio is the amount of money the Railways has to spend to earn ₹100. A lower operating ratio implies better financial health. "We hope to reduce this number further as the entire electrification process is complete – 85% of the railway network has been electrified," he said.

He also said that a train run fully on hydrogen would be ready by December 2023, and would be first run on the Kalka-Shimla heritage circuit. The Ministry is developing economic and social corridors through the railway network. "These corridors will target hilly areas, port areas, tribal areas through the Janjatiya Gaurav corridor," he said. On the work on the bullet trains, the first of which will run between Mumbai and Ahmedabad, pegged to be commissioned not before 2026, he said the Shiv Sena government had made it hard to obtain clearances in Maharashtra. "Now the government has changed and clearances are easier to come by," he said.

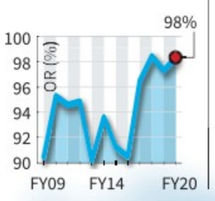
Budget support surges, internal revenue declines

The allocation for Railways has zoomed this year, while the internal revenue generated by it has consistently remained poor, resulting in a growing reliance on budgetary support and extra-budgetary resources to meet its capital expenditure

Massive boost: Railways' share in the overall budget recorded a huge jump in FY24 (BE). It accounted for 5.4% of the total budget which is a significant increase from 3.9% in FY23 (RE). Back in FY18, railway's share was just 2.1% of total budget



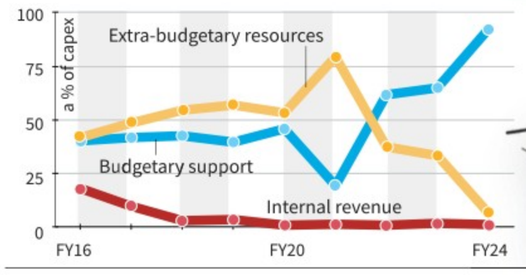
Poor returns The operating ratio (OR) of the Railways indicates the amount spent to earn ₹100. Between FY17 and FY20, OR ranged from 96% to 98%

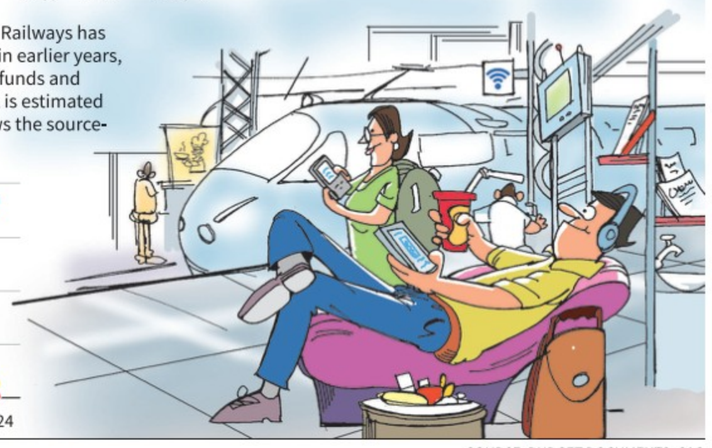


Loss-making classes: The chart shows losses (in ₹crore) incurred while operating various classes. A negative figure points to a loss. For instance, in operating AC first class service, the Railways incurred a loss of ₹403 crore in FY20. The AC III tier is the only type of class which consistently made profit for the railways

Class	FY17	FY18	FY19	FY20
AC 1	-139	-165	-249	-403
AC 2	-559	-604	-908	-1378
AC 3	+1041	+739	+318	+65
Sleeper class	-9313	-11003	-13012	-16056
Second class	-10025	-11524	-13214	-14457

External reliance: Failure to generate internal revenue by Railways has resulted in high dependence on budgetary support. While in earlier years, the dependance on extra-budgetary resources such as LIC funds and market borrowings was higher. In FY24, budgetary support is estimated to be 92% of Railways' capital expenditure. The chart shows the source-wise share in Railways' capital expenditure





SOURCE: BUDGET DOCUMENTS, CAG

Government to set up 100 5G labs to develop new apps

Mini Tejaswi
BENGALURU

> The move will go a long way in unleashing the digital potential of the country
>
> **PUNEET GUPTA**
> V-P & MD, NetApp India/SAARC

The government proposes to set up 100 labs for developing applications using 5G services in engineering institutions across the country. Three Centres of Excellence for AI will also be set up. These measures will realise a new range of opportunities, business models, and employment potential, said the Union Budget presented by the Finance Minister on Wednesday.

According to her, these labs would cover, among others, applications such as smart classrooms, precision farming, intelligent transport systems, and healthcare.

Reacting to the proposal, Bipin Sapra, Tax & Regulatory Services, Partner, EY India, said the government had taken a big leap to embrace 5G much more swiftly by setting up these labs. He agreed that they would indeed further boost employment and business opportunities in the country. "*Amrit Kaal* focuses on being a technology-driven and knowledge-based economy with one of the primary visions of growth and job creation," he said.

Piyush N. Singh, lead – Africa, India, and Middle East, Accenture, said setting up new centres of excellence for AI and 5G labs for developing apps would help democratise AI and push for wider adoption of 5G services. "It will be important for the private sector ecosystem to work closely with the government to realise the digital future of India," he said.

These measures will go a long way in unleashing the digital potential of the country, said Puneet Gupta, vice-president & managing director, NetApp India/SAARC. "The mission of *Amrit Kaal* has put us in a strong position to truly call this a digital Budget," he said.

According to Manoranjan Mohapatra, CEO, Comviva, with the ongoing 5G rollouts in India, the decision to establish large number of 5G application labs is a timely move to spur innovation in developing the 5G ecosystem and India-relevant use cases.

50 additional airports, heliports to be revived

Jagriti Chandra
NEW DELHI

Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman proposed revival of 50 additional airports, heliports, waterdromes and advance landing grounds for improving regional air connectivity.

The regional connectivity scheme of the Ministry of Civil Aviation has seen a doubling of allocation since the last allocation and has risen from ₹600 crore to ₹1,244 crore. However, the total budgetary allocation for the Ministry was slashed by 70% by virtue of reduced liabilities following the privatisation of Air India. The Ministry has received a total ₹3,113 crore for the financial year 2023-24 as compared to ₹10,667 in the budgetary allocation last fiscal.

Air India Asset Holding Ltd. (AIAHL), or a special purpose vehicle of the government where all liabilities and assets related to Air India have been parked was allocated ₹9,259 last fiscal in order to service the airline's debt moved here. This fiscal, the AIAHL has only been allocated ₹1,144 crore for interest payment for non-convertible debentures.

While heliports and waterdromes have received attention under the regional connectivity scheme launched in 2017, so far only nine heliports and two waterdromes have come up and not all of them are operational.

Vehicle scrapping policy revved up to drive green economy

The Hindu Bureau
CHENNAI

The Union Budget for 2023-24 has laid special emphasis on vehicle scrapping policy by allocating adequate funds to replace vehicles that are over 15 years.

The move has been hailed by the automobile manufacturers as it would provide a significant opportunity for fleet modernisation and reduce fossil fuel consumption.

While presenting the Union Budget on Wednesday, Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman said all vehicles owned by the Union and the State governments including buses owned by transport corporations and public sector undertakings that have been on the road for over 15 years will be scrapped.

"Replacing old polluting vehicles is an important part of greening our economy. To further the vehicle scrapping policy mentioned in Budget 2021-22, I have allocated funds to scrap old vehicles of the Central government. States will also be supported in replacing old vehicles and ambulances," she said.

Welcome move: Automakers say that the policy will not only boost sales but also cut down fossil fuel consumption. FILE PHOTO

Ashok Leyland executive chairman Dheeraj Hinduja said this Budget also echoed the company's sentiment and commitment to clean energy vehicles for a cleaner and greener future.

Vikram Gulati, country head and executive vice-president, Toyota Kirloskar Motor, said it would not only help the environment and reduce fossil fuel consumption, but also generate demand for new vehicles.

Chetan Maini, co-founder & chairman, Sun Mobility, described it as a positive step in the direction of zero carbon emission goal.

Federation of Automobile Dealers Associations of India president Manish Raj Singhania said the move would boost sales.

"The policy will enable in achieving clean environment for overall sustainable development," said Venkatram Mamillapalle, country CEO & MD, Renault India.

Daimler India Commercial Vehicles MD & CEO, Satyakam Arya said the policy provides the industry to prepare itself to replace phased out vehicles.

VIEWPOINT

KESHAV R. MURUGESH
Group CEO, WNS

Stage set for sustainable growth

Sharp cut in compliance measures, and decriminalisation of 3,400 legal provisions will help bolster trust

"A technology-driven and knowledge-based economy..." This was the curtain-raiser to the Budget 2023-24 by the Finance Minister. As the details unfolded, one witnessed several epoch-making statements around how India@100 will write its *Amrit Kaal* chapter on the global stage.

Budget 2023 truly reflects India's strong intent to lead the 'Techade' as a global innovation hub. Setting up the three Centres of Excellence for Artificial Intelligence (AI) to realise the vision of 'Make AI in India and Make AI Work for India' is a vital step in building a robust AI infrastructure. Digital and technology powerfully pervade every aspect of the Budget components, including research and innovation, platforms for women empowerment and artisan marketplaces. The influence also extends to building smart digital infrastructure, ensuring green growth, announcement of a national data governance policy, creating data embassies and digital public infrastructure for agriculture. It is a phenomenal canvas of inclusive growth that Budget 2023-24 has set out to achieve – with something substantive for everyone.

The significant reduction of more than 39,000 compliance measures and decriminalisation of 3,400 legal provisions to improve ease of doing business will certainly infuse trust in the business community. The creation of national data governance policies will lend greater force and credibility to our strong capabilities on the international stage. The 100 labs in engineering institutions to develop apps using 5G services will boost innovation in the areas of smart classrooms, precision farming, intelligent transport systems and healthcare.

The Budget provides a canvas for inclusive growth, with something substantive for everyone

On a socio-economic level, the setting up of national digital libraries will enhance access and propel educational programmes for children, especially in Tier-2 and Tier-3 cities, thereby enabling a better and equitable future. Additionally, 5G initiatives will create better connectivity between urban and rural India, help realise a new range of opportunities and generate tremendous employment.

The monumental increase of 33% in capital and infrastructure outlay is a historic one, and this will be just the force multiplier of economic growth that India seeks. Commitment to developing indigenous capabilities under the 'Make in India' initiative continues on a stronger footing. The Budget has also placed its money on the government's commitment to the environment. 'Green growth,' as the Finance Minister termed it, is backed by a handsome outlay of ₹35,000 crore towards achieving the net zero goal and energy transition. This will give an impetus to India Inc.'s Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) initiatives.

What excites me is the acknowledgment of and support to the youth dividend. Young minds will experience the benefits of skilling measures for domestic and global employment through Skill India and Skill India International centres, greater industry-academia alignment and strong policy support.

POCKET | RAVIKANTH

BUDGET 2023

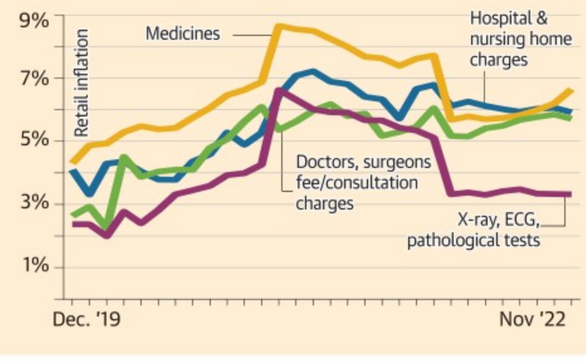
FMSpeak

"To ensure food security, the Centre will supply free food grains to all Antyodaya and priority households for the next one year

Cost of health

The chart plots the retail inflation rates for health related items. After witnessing a price surge in FY22, due to the second COVID wave, the inflation rates of medicines and procedures like X-ray, have eased in FY23 whereas hospital charges and consultation fees have remained same

Source: MOSPI



"The FM has presented a high-quality Budget that focusses on increasing capex while at the same time not compromising on fiscal discipline

T V Narendran, CEO, Tata Steel

VIEWPOINT

P.B. BALAJI
Group CFO, Tata Motors

Push to achieve net zero emissions

Increase in capex outlay is a defining feature of the Budget; this will have a cascading effect on the economy

The Union Budget 2023 has managed to delicately balance economic growth with fiscal prudence. It is also a confident and forward-looking Budget that puts money in the hands of the consumers and aggressively invests in building the nation.

The revised income tax slabs and surcharges will bring respite to the common populace. This will help increase disposable incomes and drive domestic consumption at a time when many global economies are reeling under recessionary fears and job cuts.

Strategically, the Budget envisages an increase of 33% in capex outlay to ₹10 lakh crore, which would provide a further impetus to India for becoming a globally competitive economy. This is the defining feature of the Budget, as this would have a cascading effect on private sector investments, economic growth, employment generation and structurally lower long-term inflation. The stepped-up investments have a direct bearing and a significant positive for Tata Motors' commercial vehicle business.

The revised income tax slabs and surcharges will bring respite to the common populace

It is heartening to see an outlay of ₹55,000 crore towards energy transition and National Green Hydrogen Mission. The customs duty exemption on import of capital goods and machinery required for manufacture of lithium-ion cells for batteries used in electric vehicles is a welcome move. The excise duty cuts on blended compressed natural gas will help reduce the cost of running a CNG vehicle. Additionally, adequate funds have been allocated to scrapping of the old Central and State government vehicles which would drive replacement demand and augur well for the auto industry whilst bringing down carbon emissions from older generation vehicles. These steps firmly reiterate the government's commitment and vision to achieve net zero carbon emissions by 2070 and will galvanise this industry. Given Tata Motors' commitment to green mobility, these interventions augur well for our business.

POCKET | RAVIKANTH

"My ambition is to study in a medical college by the time our village gets a high school!"

Higher fund flow for Jal Jeevan

₹69,684 crore allocated to Centre's marquee mission that aims to provide piped water to every rural household by 2024; Swachh Bharat Mission-Rural that seeks to sustain open defecation-free status in villages gets ₹77,000 crore

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

With an eye on the Lok Sabha election and the deadline approaching for the government's ambitious bid to provide piped water to every rural household by 2024, the Union government's marquee Jal Jeevan Mission has been allocated ₹69,684 crore, up from the ₹54,808 crore the Jal Shakti Ministry is expected to spend in the current financial year.

This works out to a roughly 27% hike. The Swachh Bharat Mission-Rural that aims to "sustain" the open defecation-free (ODF) status in India's villages has been apportioned ₹77,000 crore, up from the ₹60,000 crore the government expects to spend by March 2023.

Every drop counts: People collecting drinking water from a tanker truck in Dindigul, Tamil Nadu. FILE PHOTO

Last week, the Ministry tweeted that the government had provided 11 crore rural households with tap water connections. This works out to about 56% of the targeted 19.3 crore households. In September 2022, 53% of the households, or 10.2 crore households, had been covered.

In October 2022, a Ministry-commissioned survey of a cross-section of rural households said that Tamil Nadu, Himachal Pradesh, Goa and Puducherry had more than 80% of households with fully functional connections, while fewer than half of the households in Rajasthan, Kerala, Manipur, Tripura, Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh, Mizoram and Sikkim had such connections.

Functional connection

A fully functional tap water connection is defined as a household getting at least 55 litres of potable water per capita a day all through the year.

Close to three-fourths of households, according to the survey, received water all seven days a week, and 8% just once a week.

On average, households received water for three hours every day, and 80% reported that their daily requirements of water were being met by the tap connections.

The Jal Jeevan Mission has a financial outlay of ₹3.6 lakh crore, with the Centre funding 50% of the cost with States and Union Territories, except for Union Territories without a Legislature where it foots the entire bill, and northeastern and Himalayan States and Union Territories with legislatures, where it funds 90% of the bill.

Senior citizen scheme limit doubled to ₹30 lakh

Press Trust of India
NEW DELHI

Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman on Wednesday proposed to double the deposit limit for Senior Citizen Savings Scheme to ₹30 lakh and Monthly Income Account Scheme to ₹9 lakh.

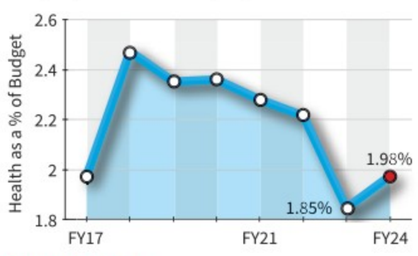
"The maximum deposit limit for Senior Citizen Savings Scheme will be enhanced from ₹15 lakh to ₹30 lakh," the Minister said in her 87-minute speech.

The Minister also proposed that the maximum deposit limit for the Monthly Income Account Scheme will be enhanced from ₹4.5 lakh to ₹9 lakh for a single account and from ₹9 lakh to ₹15 lakh for a joint account.

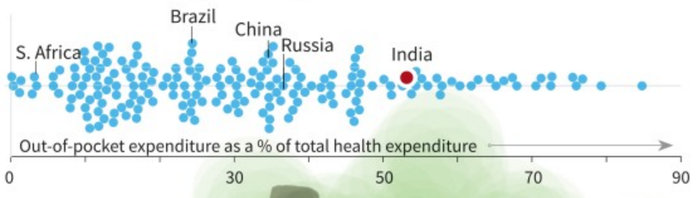
Health outlay remains weak

Health allocation has always remained poor in India compared to many other emerging economies. Health expenditure as a % of Budget declined during the pandemic years and plunged even further to below 2% in FY23 (RE) and FY24 (BE)

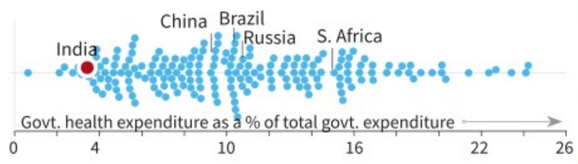
Poor health outlay: The share of funds to the health sector in the overall Budget has marginally increased in FY24. It improved from 1.85% in FY23(RE) to 1.98% in FY24(BE)



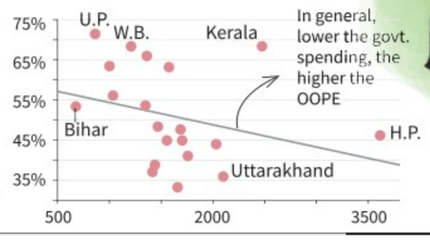
Out-of-pocket: The health outlay remained poor even as India has one of the highest out-of-pocket health expenditures (OOPE) in the world. In India, out-of-pocket health expenditure as a share of current health expenditure was 53.2% in 2019 India's OOPE was the highest among all five BRICS countries



Govt. spending: Government health expenditure in India is one of the lowest in the world, forming only 3.4% of total govt. expenditure in 2019. India has the lowest govt. health expenditure among BRICS countires



State-wise: The chart plots State-wise OOPE as a % of total health expenditure against the State government's per capita health expense (₹) in FY19. The higher the OOPE, the lower the govt. spending on health



SOURCE: BUDGET DOCUMENTS, NHA, WHO

More for health; less for research projects

Maitri Porecha
NEW DELHI

The Union Budget 2023-24 has announced an allocation of ₹89,155 crore for the Ministry of Health, which is 3.43% higher than its previous outlay of ₹86,200.65 crore.

Of the ₹89,155 crore outlay, ₹86,175 crore has been earmarked for the Department of Health and Family Welfare and ₹2,980 crore for the Department of Health Research.

The Indian Council of Medical Research falls under the Department of Health Research.

As compared to FY22-23 when ₹3,200 crore was allocated to the Department of Health Research, the allocation has been slashed. There is a 6.87% decrease in the allocation this year, Budget documents note. The allocation has decreased due to lower utilisation of funds. In FY 21-22, only ₹2,690.61 crore was utilised.

Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (PM-JAY) which provides cashless health insurance of up to ₹5 lakh per family has been allocated ₹7,200 crore in FY 23-24, higher than last year's ₹6,412 crore.

However, utilisation of funds under the scheme has been low with only ₹3,115 crore being used in FY 21-22. PM-JAY has seen up to 4.3 crore hospital admissions as of January 4, with less than 50% of the originally targeted 50 crore beneficiaries registered under the scheme.

Women get a one-time small savings scheme

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman on Wednesday announced a one-time small savings scheme for women to commemorate celebrations of 75 years of Independence.

"Commemorating *Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav*, a one-time new small savings scheme, Mahila Samman Savings Certificate, will be made available for a two-year period up to March 2025," she said.

The small saving certificate will have a fixed interest rate of 7.5% for two years. The deposit can be made in the name of a woman or a girl child. The maximum deposit amount has been kept at ₹2 lakh and the scheme will have a partial withdrawal facility as well. She said that women's self-help groups (SHGs) had achieved remarkable success under the Deendayal Antyodaya Yojana National Rural Livelihood Mission by mobilising rural women into 81 lakh SHGs.

"We will enable these groups to reach the next stage of economic empowerment through formation of large producer enterprises or collectives with each having several thousand members and managed professionally," she said.

> The certificate will have a fixed interest rate of 7.5% for two years. The deposit can be made in the name of a woman or a girl child
>
> **NIRMALA SITHARAMAN**
> Union Finance Minister

The amount allocated to the Ministry of Women and Child Development saw an increase of ₹267 crore from ₹25,172.28 crore allotted in 2022-23. The largest allocation of ₹20,554.31 crore has been for the Saksham Anganwadi and POSHAN 2.0 schemes, while ₹1,472 crore has been allotted to Mission VATSALYA (Child Protection Services and Child Welfare Services), and ₹3,143 crore to Mission Shakti (Mission for Protection and Empowerment for Women).

Autonomous bodies, including the Central Adoption Resource Agency, the National Commission for Protection of Child Rights and the National Commission for Women, have been given ₹168 crore.

38,800 teachers, support staff to be recruited for Eklavya schools

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The Union government will hire 38,800 teachers and support staff for 740 Eklavya Model Residential Schools for tribal students across the country over the next three years, Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman said on Wednesday.

The announcement comes months after *The Hindu* reported in September last year that Eklavya schools were running with fewer than half the number of teachers recommended by the National Education Society for Tribal Students (NESTS), the managing authority for such schools.

NESTS officials had said they were not able to fix the shortage because of the structure, under which they did not have the power to issue directions to the State Education Societies for Tribal Students. Senior officials in the Ministry of Tribal Affairs said a change in the structure had already been approved.

"This year, we will recruit at least 10,000 teachers for Eklavya schools," an official said.

₹15,000 crore to be spent for development of tribes

Abhinay Lakshman
NEW DELHI

Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman on Wednesday announced the Pradhan Mantri Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PVTG) Development Mission to focus on improving the overall socio-economic conditions of 75 such groups across the country.

These groups live in nearly 31,000 villages across 18 States and one Union Territory.

Helping hand: Plans are afoot to provide housing, clean drinking water, road and telecom connectivity in tribal habitations. AP

Ms. Sitharaman said the Union government was putting forward an expenditure outlay of ₹15,000 crore, making this amount available over the next three years for the implementation of this mission.

"This will saturate PVTG families and habitations with basic facilities such as safe housing, clean drinking water and sanitation, improved access to education, health and nutrition, road and telecom connectivity, and sustainable livelihood opportunities," the Finance Minister said.

Ms. Sitharaman added that the amount being set aside for this would be spent under the Development Action Plan for the Scheduled Tribes. The detailed Budget statement for FY 2023-24 showed that the Ministry of Tribal Affairs has been allocated a total of ₹12,461.88 crore, out of which the Ministry's scheme for the Development of PVTGs, has been allocated ₹256.14 crore.

One senior official of the Tribal Affairs Ministry said, "In most of these 31,000 villages, the need for infrastructure development is the most urgent."

A raft of concessions amid consolidation

While promoting inclusive development, the Budget gives more to the affluent than to the poor

If budget making is a complex task, interpreting the Union Budget can be hazardous given the amount of fine print that one has to pore over. Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman's fifth Budget, and the current Bharatiya Janata Party-led government's final full-fledged one before next year's general election, ticks all the right boxes on the face of it. Inclusive development that ensures prosperity for all, especially the youth, women, farmers, Other Backward Classes, Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes, a focus on infrastructure and investment that serves as a multiplier for growth and employment, policies to enable green or environmentally sustainable growth, the rationalisation of direct taxes, including a raft of concessions to the middle and salaried classes, and pensioners, and, most importantly, doing all this while staying the course on fiscal consolidation. Terming it the "first Budget in Amrit Kaal", Ms. Sitharaman sounded the poll bugle by emphasising the ruling dispensation's achievements since 2014, when Prime Minister Narendra Modi first assumed office. Per capita income, she said, had more than doubled to ₹1.97 lakh as a result of the economy's growth to being the world's fifth-largest and the government's efforts to ensure a better quality of living for all. She also cited an increase in formalisation of the economy and the widespread adoption of digital technologies, especially in the payments sphere, as other significant achievements.

With an eye on 'India at 100', the Budget proposals, Ms. Sitharaman said, were aimed at actualising a "technology-driven and knowledge-based economy with strong public finances, and a robust financial sector". Emphasising that the economic agenda for achieving this vision would, among other things, require a focus on giving a strong impetus to growth and job creation, the Minister laid out her Budget proposals that were heavy on this government's trademark acronyms describing the various schemes, but relatively light on details. PM VIKAS or Pradhan Mantri Vishwakarma Kaushal Samman, for instance, would for the first time offer traditional artisans and craftspeople, or Vishwakarmas, a package of assistance aimed at helping them improve the quality, scale and reach of their products, she said. Specifics, including a financial outlay and the likely mechanics of implementation, were, however, not spelt out. Similarly, a 'Mangrove Initiative for Shoreline Habitats & Tangible Incomes' or 'MISHTI', aimed at undertaking mangrove plantation along the coastline and on salt pan lands leaves the funding to a "convergence between MGNREGS and a compensatory afforestation fund". With the rural sector's mainstay employment guarantee scheme, one that was introduced during the Congress-led United Progressive Alliance government's term, itself increasingly being starved of budgetary support, it is hard to fathom how the new initiative to protect and regenerate the ecologically sensitive mangroves will be funded. The decrease in outlay comes at a time when the rural economy is still to regain vigour from the ravages of the pandemic, the fallout on incomes from the uneven distribution of last year's monsoon rainfall, and the relatively greater impact of high food inflation on hinterland households.

At a broader level, the Budget estimate for expenditure on rural development in 2023-24 is pegged at ₹2.38 lakh crore, a marginal 0.1 percentage point increase when measured as a proportion of overall expenditure at 5.3%, compared with the 5.2% in the previous Budget Estimate. When viewed against the revised estimate, the outlay is a good 0.6 percentage point lower. Food subsidy too has been sharply pared: at ₹1.97 lakh crore, it is almost 5% lower than the 2022-23 Budget estimate and a steep 31% down from the revised estimate. To be sure, the government's resolve to stay the course on fiscal consolidation, especially after the COVID-19 pandemic had led it to spend more even as revenue receipts dipped amid the unprecedented economic contraction, left Ms. Sitharaman with little leeway on the expenditure front once she had decided that the government would concentrate its resources on increased public outlays on infrastructure and investment. Capital expenditure has been allocated ₹10 lakh crore, a 33% jump from this fiscal's Budget estimate. If one adds the almost ₹3.7 lakh crore set aside for grants-in-aid to States for the creation of capital assets, the Minister's laudable intent to apply the force multiplier of government capital spending as the primary lever to spur economic activity becomes clearly evident. With global demand uncertain this year on account of the slowdown in the developed economies, as the Economic Survey pertinently pointed out, India's domestic market will necessarily have to serve as the economy's bulwark. Ms. Sitharaman has also attempted to woo the middle class with a raft of changes in personal income tax that would, in combination with tweaks to customs duties, in total cost the government ₹ 37,000 crore in foregone direct tax revenue. Some of these changes are aimed at leaving more money in the hands of the salaried and pensioners, cash that the Budget planners hope would find its way back either as savings or increased spending on vital consumption. The biggest beneficiaries of the income-tax changes though are likely to be those in the highest income bracket, where the effective rate has been cut by 3.74 percentage points reinforcing a perception that this government bats for the affluent.

A Budget that signals growth with stability

M. Govinda Rao

is Chief Economist, Brickwork Analytics, a former Director of the National Institute of Public Finance and Policy, and a Member of the Fourteenth Finance Commission

The Economic Survey that was placed in Parliament before the presentation of the Budget for 2023-24 has laid emphasis on the point that India has staged a remarkable broad-based recovery to reach the level of income that existed before the outbreak of the novel coronavirus pandemic. There have been a series of shocks that began with the pandemic, followed by the war between Russia and Ukraine and the accompanying sanctions that have been imposed by the West on Russia, the slowdown and the recession in major parts of the world and the rise in inflation leading to sharp increases in interest rates, followed by capital outflow and the pressure on the exchange rate.

Growth and the fiscal deficit shadow

Even though the economy has staged a recovery and surpassed the pre-pandemic income level, it is still 7% below the pre-pandemic GDP trend; growth has to be fuelled by increasing public investment. At the same time, with inflation still beyond the upper tolerance limit and aggregate fiscal deficit (Centre and States) still in the range of 9% to 10% of GDP, ensuring macroeconomic stability requires continued fiscal consolidation. Thus the government is faced with the dilemma of accelerating growth by increasing public investment while containing the fiscal deficit. With interest payments accounting for 40% of the net revenues of the Centre, there is hardly any room for complacency.

Interestingly, keeping the fiscal deficit limited to 6.4% of GDP in the current fiscal has come about despite a sharp increase in food and fertilizer subsidies, by ₹2 lakh crore. While the higher than budgeted buoyancy in net tax revenues by almost ₹1.6 lakh crore has helped, a significant part of the adjustment is due to an increase in the denominator, the nominal value of GDP as compared to the assumption made in Budget 2022-23. The Budget estimate had assumed the nominal GDP for 2022-23 at ₹258 lakh crore whereas the first advance estimate of GDP released a few days ago estimated it at ₹273 lakh crore. In other words, despite the revenue deficit increasing in absolute terms, from ₹9.9 lakh crore in the Budget estimate to ₹11.1 lakh crore in the revised estimate, as a percentage of GDP, it was from 3.8% of GDP to 4.1%. In the case of fiscal deficit, the increase was by ₹1 lakh crore – from ₹16.6 lakh crore to ₹17.6 lakh crore, but it was contained at 6.4% of GDP mainly due to the increase in the nominal value of GDP and also the increase in tax collections.

Faced with the challenge of increasing infrastructure spending while continuing with fiscal consolidation, the Finance Minister's balancing act has given India a well-crafted Budget

A balancing act

Considering the challenges of increasing infrastructure spending while continuing with fiscal consolidation, it has been a fine balancing act on the part of the Finance Minister. She has continued the trend of making a greater allocation to infrastructure spending, and the capital expenditure is budgeted to increase from 2.7% of GDP to 3.3%. In absolute terms, the increase is from ₹7.3 lakh crore to ₹10 lakh crore, which is almost 37%, and considering that capital expenditure has a significant 'crowding in' effect, it should help to increase private capital expenditures as well. This comes after the 25% increase in capital expenditures in the last Budget.

The Reserve Bank of India has estimated the multiplier effect of capital expenditure at 1.2 – and that should help revive the sagging investment climate. Commercial lending by banks is already on the rise and with deleveraged balance sheets, the increased capital spending should help revive the investment climate further and arrest the declining trend in the overall investment-GDP ratio in the country. Further, the continuation of the interest-free loan to States to augment their capital expenditures should help in increasing States' capital expenditures as well. Perhaps, the 6.5% growth rate for 2023-24 estimated in the Economic Survey, which was otherwise considered too optimistic, could indeed materialise with the budgeted increase in infrastructure spending.

The Finance Minister in the 2020-21 Budget had stated that she would bring down the fiscal deficit to 4.5% by 2025-26. That means that in the next three years, the deficit will have to be reduced by 1.9 percentage points. In keeping with this, the fiscal deficit for 2023-24 is slated to come down to 5.9%. However, it will make the adjustment in the two years ahead that much harder. Although nine States will have elections this year, front-loading the adjustment would have eased the situation next year when the country has the next general election. Perhaps, the Finance Minister assumed that by propelling growth this year through higher capital expenditure, the fiscal adjustment will become easier in the next two years.

Compression in subsidies

The fiscal adjustment is proposed to be achieved by mainly containing revenue expenditure, which will improve the quality of public spending if it happens. The budgeted increase in revenue expenditures for 2023-24 is just 1.2% higher than the revised estimate for the current year. There is a significant compression in subsidies. The fertilizer subsidy is expected to be reduced by ₹90,000 crore from ₹2.87 lakh crore to ₹1.87 lakh crore. The policy to this effect has already been made in December 2022, when the Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Ann Yojana (PMGKAY) under which 5 kg of foodgrains were given from April 2020, in addition to the foodgrains given under the National Food Securities Act has been discontinued. Similarly, the fertilizer subsidy is expected to be compressed by ₹50,000 mainly as fertilizer prices have come down. In addition, allocation to centrally sponsored schemes is expected to come down marginally by about ₹20,000 crore, and the overall current transfer to States is kept constant at 3.3%-3.4% of GDP.

On the tax side, there is some tinkering of customs duty, and the overall protectionist stance has continued. On the personal income tax front, the attempt has been to incentivise taxpayers to move to the new tax regime with no concessions and lower rates. Even so, the increase in the number of tax brackets is cause for worry. Perhaps, it would have been preferable to move over to the new tax regime with fewer brackets.

On the whole, this is a well-crafted Budget, but its success will depend on its implementation.

The growth deceleration problem cannot be skipped

R. Nagaraj

was with the Indira Gandhi Institute of Development Research, Mumbai

The much-anticipated Budget for 2023-24 has been presented. The Budget speech began with a self-congratulatory note: that India has successfully overcome the troubles that came with the COVID-19 pandemic, to a large extent, by ensuring the free food distribution scheme for 800 million people and other ongoing food security programmes. And, it added, India has fully recovered from the output contraction after one year to emerge as one of the world's fastest growing economies. In fact, while commenting on the Economic Survey that was presented on the day preceding the Budget, Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman reportedly said that the economy can now get on with the growth trajectory that it was charting before the outbreak of the pandemic in 2020.

Reversal in aggregate parameters

So, what was the economic situation like before the pandemic? It was an economy in decline for the entire decade of the 2010s – perhaps contrary to the Finance Minister's perception. Real average annual GDP growth rate in the 2010s, that is, net of inflation, had decelerated 5%-6% from 7%-8% in the previous decade, that is, the 2000s. If the professional criticisms of GDP estimates are valid, its annual growth rate is perhaps lower at 4%-5% than official estimates.

More seriously, India has de-industrialised prematurely since the mid-2010s, with a steep fall in annual output growth rates, from 13.1% in 2015-16 to negative 2.4% in 2019-20 even before the pandemic struck. Deindustrialisation is accompanied by falling aggregate fixed investment rates and domestic savings rates by 4 percentage -5 percentage points of GDP, compared to that of the previous decade of the 2000s. Never in post-independent India has the economy witnessed such a reversal in crucial aggregate parameters.

The Budget's vision and expenditure priorities need to be viewed in this context. The Finance Minister's speech rightly emphasised the role of infrastructure and public investment as virtuous since such investments crowd-in private investment. The Budget seeks to raise capital investment outlay to 3.3%, the highest during the last three years. If the grant-in-aid to States is included, the ratio could be up to 4.5% of the outlays. While this is welcome, it is not clear on what specific sectors and schemes this is to be spent.

The Budget's renewed commitment to investment-led growth is fine, but it fails to look at the longer-term issues and find solutions

The Budget's extension of the interest-free loans of a 50-year tenure to States for infrastructure investment is also welcome. However, their utilisation has been mixed at best, as the conditions seem onerous on poorer States. There is, perhaps, a need to engage with States to improve their utilisation.

Capital expenditure on railways is proposed to be enhanced to ₹2.40 lakh crore, nine times what it was in 2013-14. This is also welcome, but we need to know what this means in real terms or as a proportion of budgetary outlays. Moreover, without knowing the nature of the proposed expenditure, its effectiveness cannot be assessed. For instance, if the railway investment is on much-needed modernisation of rail tracks and rolling stock, it would enhance efficiency. However, if the spend is on station modernisation or other such 'glamorous' projects, it may add little to productivity.

The government of the day has all along favoured infrastructure investment over directly productive investment in agriculture and industry, whose share in gross fixed capital formation (GFCF) rate (that is, as a proportion of GDP) has declined. However, evidence shows that the share of infrastructure real GVA and GFCF has hardly improved over the decade of the 2010s, as in estimates reported by the Reserve Bank of India. Therefore, there is a need for caution in accepting the budgetary numbers at their face value.

Import dependence on China

Premature deindustrialisation and the consequent growing dependence on Chinese imports are serious challenges to India in following an independent path of national development. The government's flagship initiatives 'Make in India' (launched in 2014) and Aatmanirbhar Bharat Abhiyan (launched in 2020), are meant to overcome these shortcomings. The "Production Linked Incentive (PLI) Scheme (launched in 2021) was to give incentives for such investments. However, the Budget has hardly furthered these efforts, or had an assessment of how they have performed. The Budget speaks in glowing terms of how the phased manufacturing programme in the mobile phone assembly industry has succeeded in boosting exports. While the headline numbers may be true, they hide the fact that imports of the kits of mobile parts or (kits) have also gone up proportionately as domestic value addition is minimal. Careful research shows that backward integration to produce components and sub-assemblies has made little progress.

Another piece of evidence that shows rising import dependence on China is the growing trade deficit with that country – going up from $57.4 billion in 2018 to $64.5 billion in 2021. The Budget, regrettably, has little to say about the growing threat of structural dependence on China.

The truth about bank credit growth

The Budget mentions rising bank credit growth as a positive sign of investment revival. Again, while the headline is correct, the share of the credit accruing to industry has barely inched up, with most increase accruing to personal loans, which may add to luxury (imported) consumption, and not boost the economy's productivity capacity.

One of the reasons for private long-term investment lagging is the lack of access to long-term credit, as is widely acknowledged. In 2021 the government promoted The National Bank for Financing Infrastructure and Development (NBFID) with substantial equity investment. Unfortunately, the Development Financial Institutions seem to have made modest progress in boosting industrial and infrastructure investment. If the Budget is serious about boosting private investment it has to ensure better performance of the NBFID. However, the Budget has little to say about the much publicised initiative.

In sum, the Budget's renewed commitment to investment-led growth is well taken. However, the investment magnitudes mentioned (without details) seem to come up short. The Budget seems to fail to grapple with the problem of the decade-long growth deceleration in the 2010s, the unprecedented fall in investment and savings rates compared to the previous decade and premature de-industrialisation since the mid-2010s. Without appreciating these longer-term constraints and finding their solutions, it is perhaps hard to make India Atmanirbhar Bharat.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Budget takeaways

In constructing a budget in a progressive economy, every government worth its salt must flatter to deceive. Edition 2023-24 was suave, but with much subdued deception and the tapestry of future schemes and intent woven in. On the hardware, despite a higher capital allocation, the Budget still intends to cap its market borrowings to aim at a sub 6% fiscal deficit as it counts on lesser subsidy outflow in the agro-sector. The markets were visibly enthused. In its purposeful nudge away from the old tax regime, the government, by retaining earlier deduction thresholds, has caused dismay in quite a few sectors. For the insurance business, rising to its hitherto denied prominence and now flourishing post COVID-19, this is bad tidings. Indices have dipped more on a lack of fillip with regard to capital gains. Rationalisation of personal income slabs and enhanced deductions come as a relief to lower income tax-payers..

R. Narayanan,
Navi Mumbai

The NREGA programme has suffered a jolt. In recent years the actual expenditure has been higher but the Budget estimate this year has been reduced from ₹73,000 crore to ₹60,000 crore. This could escalate unemployment. The Union government should not make a mockery of this flagship scheme.

S.K. Khosla,
Chandigarh

While welcoming the proposal in Budget 2023-24 to raise the tax exemption on leave encashment on retirement of non-government salaried employees, from ₹3 lakh to ₹25 lakh, the same could be implemented with effect from FY20-21. Pensioners experienced difficulties because of the novel coronavirus pandemic as there was also a freeze in their DA increase. Now that economic recovery has begun — according to the official claim — the government would do well to consider this.

Angara Venkata Girija Kumar,
Chennai

The salaried class people have learnt to be wary and not look at the Budget with any great expectations. By staggering and increasing the number of income-tax slabs and by also narrowing the gaps and realigning the rates conveniently, the Finance Minister has cleverly absorbed the notional loss. Taxpayers continuing to cough up more than ₹1 lakh of tax annually remains addressed on paper but unaddressed in reality. The promise made by the Finance Minister that senior citizens would be taken care of is still an empty one.

Manoharan Muthuswamy,
Chennai

Letters emailed to letters@thehindu.co.in must carry the full postal address.

The social sector has been short-changed once again

Social sector initiatives which contribute to improving lives, improving human development outcomes, and economic revival have received inadequate allocations

Dipa Sinha

teaches Economics at Dr. B.R. Ambedkar University Delhi

The 2023 Budget did not have any big welfare announcements, which are usually expected from a government's last full Budget before it faces national elections, and especially when there is a general economic slowdown that has particularly affected the poor. Rather, it reiterates the strategic vision of this government in which both economic recovery and job creation rest on increased capital expenditure (capex) by the government, and welfare spending is not a priority. The Budget announced a capex of ₹10 lakh crore, a 33% increase over last year. Along with grant-in-aid for capital assets, the budget estimate (BE) for effective capex is now ₹13.7 lakh crore, which is 4.5% of the GDP, up from 3.9% last year. This increase is accompanied by the government remaining on its 'path of fiscal consolidation,' with the fiscal deficit for FY24 projected to be 5.9% of the GDP, a reduction from 6.4% for the current year. The Finance Minister reiterated her commitment to reaching a fiscal deficit below 4.5% by 2025-26. What this has meant is that essential schemes that provide a safety net and contribute to better human development outcomes have been short-changed.

Decreased allocations

The BE for food subsidy is ₹1.97 lakh crore compared to the revised estimate (RE) of ₹2.8 lakh crore for 2022-23. This did not come as a surprise as the government had already announced the withdrawal of additional provision of 5 kg of cereals per person per month through the Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Anna Yojana (PMGKAY), introduced as part of the COVID-19 relief package in 2020. The existing benefits under the National Food Security Act continue and will now be given for free, but this does not compensate for the reduced quantity of grains. The PMGKAY played a critical role in preventing starvation during the pandemic and needed to be continued with the same quantity for longer.

The Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGS), which contributed significantly to livelihoods for many over the last two years, has also seen a massive budget cut. The BE for 2023-24 is ₹60,000 crore compared to the RE of ₹89,400 crore for 2022-23.

Workers construct stone bunds under the MGNREGS at the Kembanur settlement in Gobichettipalayam taluk in Erode district, Tamil Nadu. GOVARTHAN M.

Even with the increase in the work provided, there is a huge unmet demand, which is being discouraged by delayed wage payments and low wage rates. Therefore, an increase in budgetary support was required, along with the removal of barriers to timely and appropriate payments, such as the app-based attendance monitoring system. MGNREGS wages for a few years have been not only lower than the minimum wages, but also the prevailing market wages for unskilled workers in rural areas.

Programmes that provide nutritional support for women and children have also seen inadequate and lower allocations. The allocation for Saksham Anganwadi, which includes anganwadi services, Poshan Abhiyan and a scheme for adolescent girls, remains almost the same at ₹20,554 crore compared to the ₹20,263 crore last year (BE and RE). The school meals scheme, rechristened PM-POSHAN, has been allocated ₹11,600 crore compared to the RE of ₹12,800 crore for 2022-23. And Samarthya, which includes the maternity entitlements scheme along with a few other women empowerment schemes, has been allocated ₹2,582 crore compared to the previous year's allocation of ₹2,622 crore (BE). Each of these schemes pertains to some of the most vulnerable communities and provides services that are critical to improving nutrition status. A recent report of the Accountability Initiative showed that the budgets for anganwadi services and mid-day meals are over 30% less than in 2011 in real terms. What this means is that the number of beneficiaries is declining, the per beneficiary allocations have not changed for years and contributions towards honorariums for anganwadi workers, helpers and mid-day meal cooks have been stagnant.

The allocations for old age, widow and disabled pensions under the National Social Assistance Programme have also remained stagnant (around ₹9,600 crore). The important areas in the social sector – education and health – have also not seen any substantial increase. In nominal terms, the Budget of the Department of School Education has increased by 8.4% and that of the Department of Health and Family Welfare by 3.8%. To achieve the spending goals set by the national policies on education (6% of GDP) and health (2.5% of GDP), the allocations need to be doubled.

Improving lives and economy

Along with the immediate impact that the low investments in these areas have on the lives of people, it must also be recognised that expenditure on these different social sector initiatives contribute in a large way to improving the lives of people in the long term as well as to economic revival. Spending on MGNREGA or the food subsidy or pensions can revive demand. Providing public services in health and education improves human development outcomes, increases productivity, and creates employment opportunities. To what extent capex contributes to job creation, especially for wage workers, needs to be assessed. The increases in capex are to a large extent in highways and railways – areas which use capital-intensive technologies with small wage components. Therefore, the issue is not just about protecting some 'doles' for the poor but on what our vision for *Amrit Kaal* is - it surely can't be one where half the population has to struggle with access to education, health, nutrition and social security.

A Budget without a vision for agriculture

Despite the adverse factors in agriculture, the government has cut food and fertilizer subsidies and allotted little for animal husbandry, dairy and fisheries

R. Ramakumar

is Professor at the Tata Institute of Social Sciences, Mumbai

Globally, there is a twin crisis in agriculture: in food and in fertilizers. On the one hand, there are fears of a fall in the global production and availability of food. The rise in food inflation has been an area of serious concern for the government and the Reserve Bank of India. On the other, global fertilizer prices have risen by about 200% over the past two years. Consequently, the prices of fertilizers and other farm chemicals in India have also shot up.

Domestically, the Union government has the unenviable task of explaining why it failed to double the real incomes of farmers between 2015 and 2022. Official data show that real incomes from cultivation have fallen in absolute terms after 2015. Between 2020-21 and 2022-23, annual growth rates in agriculture and allied sectors have been stagnant between 3% and 3.5%. Agricultural exports have risen, but the impact of this has been insignificant outside a handful of commodities.

Thus, the objectives of the Budget could be formulated as two-fold: one, it must have protected farmers and consumers from the food and fertilizer crises; and two, it must have taken steps to raise net incomes from cultivation.

Disappointing allocations

It was widely expected that food and fertilizer subsidies would be retained or increased. The restructuring of the food distribution guidelines, which effectively ended a part of the free supply of food grains under the Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Anna Yojana, was a disappointment even prior to the Budget. The Budget has reaffirmed that stance and cut food subsidy from ₹2.87 lakh crore in 2022-23 (RE) to ₹1.97 lakh crore in 2023-24 (BE). Fertilizer subsidies have also been cut from ₹2.25 lakh crore to ₹1.75 lakh crore. In effect, these cuts will expose farmers to the vagaries of the global market and render the economics of agriculture more fragile. Landless households in rural areas are also likely to be affected adversely, as the allocation for the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme has been cut from ₹73,000 crore in 2022-23 (BE) to ₹60,000 crore in 2023-24 (BE).

A farmer spreads fertilizer in a field, at a village in Madurai. PTI

The cut in fertilizer subsidies will increase the costs of cultivation for farmers, but there is no amelioration to be expected from a compensatory rise in output prices. The rise in minimum support prices between 2020-21 and 2021-22 just covered for the rise in input costs and did not leave any space for higher net incomes.

There has been no solace on the production front too. Yields in agriculture remain low. Rising fertilizer prices have led to lower consumption of fertilizers in farms, leading to imbalanced nutrient application and even poorer prospects of yield rise. The government, on the other hand, has been promoting variants of "natural farming". The Budget has even allocated ₹459 crore to a new National Mission on Natural Farming. But natural farming has no scientific validation and is likely to reduce crop yields by 25-30%. If yields fall, how can farming stay viable in the face of rising input prices and stagnant output prices?

Capital expenditure

Amidst all the talk of raising capital expenditure, agriculture presents us with a story of utter neglect. Capital investment is required in agriculture not just for irrigation but also to build/improve agricultural markets (mandis). The total capex of the government in 2022-23 was ₹7.5 lakh crore, but allocation under the capital accounts of crop husbandry, animal husbandry, dairy and fisheries was just ₹119 crore. In 2023-24, this is expected to fall to ₹84.3 crore. Under the capital account of irrigation and flood control, the budgeted allocation in 2022-23 was only ₹350 crore, which is slated to fall to ₹325 crore in 2023-24. The Agriculture Infrastructure Fund (AIF) is another much-touted scheme. The budgeted allocation for AIF in 2022-23 was ₹500 crore, of which only ₹150 crore was spent. In 2023-24, the allocation of ₹500 crore has been retained.

The Finance Minister made a series of other announcements on agriculture in her speech, but the allocations for these schemes or scheme components are not listed in the Budget documents. Essentially, all these are fragmented allocations thinly spread across diverse departments with only an indirect or marginal impact on the agricultural sector. Good examples are the Agriculture Accelerator Fund, PM-Pranam, GOBARdhan, Bhartiya Prakritik Kheti Bio-Input Resource Centres, Mishti, and Amrit Dharohar. There was much time spent in the speech on millets too, but without any explicit allocation other than in upgrading a Centre for Excellence in Hyderabad. There was yet another announcement on a targeted investment of ₹6,000 crore under the Pradhan Mantri Matsya Sampada Yojana, but the actual increase in allocation in the Budget papers is only ₹ 121 crore.

The Budget fails to address the most pressing problems in Indian agriculture. The lack of a scientific and grounded vision, which must have ideally driven the quantum and direction of allocations, is telling.

A balance between capital outlays and fiscal prudence

The Budget provides a thrust on capital expenditure and a nudge for multiple transitions, but these need long-term commitments and clear transition paths

M. Suresh Babu

is Professor of Economics at IIT Madras and is currently Advisor to the Prime Minister's Economic Advisory Council. Views are personal

The Budget comes at a time when the government faces a delicate balancing act between expenditure priorities and the need for fiscal prudence as it is the last full Budget before the general elections. From a macroeconomic standpoint, two areas were of concern: the fiscal deficit target for 2023-24 (FY24) and the allocation for capital expenditure (capex). On both counts, the Budget has stuck to the trajectory of previous years.

There are five issues that need to be analysed in this Budget – three from a growth and fiscal stability perspective and two from a welfare perspective.

Growth perspective

The first is continuity in the path of fiscal consolidation, which the Finance Minister has stuck to. The fiscal deficit ratio is to come down from 6.4% in FY23 to 5.9% in FY24, which means we're on the path towards a fiscal deficit target of 4.5% of GDP by 2025-26. Here, the Finance Minister is guided by the logic that the economy has recouped from the pandemic shock and is on the path of growth, which means there is no further need for continued affirmative action. The fiscal deficit target assumes that the economy is on a relatively strong footing, with another year of healthy tax collections.

However, global headwinds will continue to weigh in. A third of the global economy is expected to slip into recession in calendar year 2023, as per the International Monetary Fund. This may affect manufacturing and other related sectors and impact revenue collections.

On the expenditure front, the Budget has stuck to spending commitments for infrastructure and flagship welfare and subsidy schemes. The fiscal deficit of ₹17.8 lakh crore will be financed using short-term borrowings and the National Social Security Fund. Given the tight liquidity condition of the banking system, this will not exert pressures on the flow of funds.

The second is the question of infrastructure and capex. The

Construction of the Coastal Road Project in Mumbai. PTI

government believes that the best way to sustain India's growth, create more jobs and boost consumption is through high-multiplier capex. The increase in capex to ₹10 lakh crore is substantial and will be 3.3% of GDP as against 2.7% last year. This is also supplemented by the ₹79,000 crore on affordable housing on the revenue expenditure side. The States can continue to avail of long-term, interest-free loans for their capex needs, but within selected broad sectors. As in earlier years, the Centre has been doing the heavy-lifting here and has been trying to pass the baton to the private sector, to 'crowd in' with their share. How much of it comes is crucial for medium-term growth prospects.

Third, on the revenue front, the government has kept its ambition for growth in direct taxes moderate for FY24, after buoyant tax receipts in FY23 and FY22. The Budget has provided direct tax sops for individuals and MSMEs. However, this may not translate into higher consumption as it is an indexation of the lower tax brackets with inflation, which has been high in the recent past. In terms of combating inflation, the Budget is silent on two potential possibilities: issues related to GST, which are outside its purview; and tinkering the excise rate on fuel. On the revenue side, numbers pertaining to disinvestment and non-tax revenue are interesting. The Budget is persevering ₹51,000 crore for disinvestment and the target for FY23 has been lowered only to ₹50,000 crore. This means that we can expect some big tickets in the next two months. Regarding non-tax revenues, dividends from the banking sector, including the Reserve Bank of India (RBI), have been placed at ₹48,000 crore, that is, the transfers from the RBI may be lower in the coming year.

Welfare perspective

Fourth, for the social sector, the push for providing last-mile connectivity is the broad approach. The Budget takes the route of empowering women through self-help groups, which are mostly in rural areas. Ambitious programmes have been spelt out for this and the co-operative sector. But expenditure on the social sector does not register a quantum jump, though there is an increase in absolute terms with some new initiatives towards skilling in both education and health.

Fifth, the Budget nudges transitions from the old tax regime to the new, from conventional to digital agriculture, from fossil fuels to hydrogen, from natural to laboratory diamonds. These need long-term commitments and clear transition paths.

The test of the Budget would be on two counts. First, there are signs of improved balance sheets of both companies and banks, as we have come out of the twin balance sheet problems. This should translate into an upturn in the private investment cycle to generate more jobs. But the constraint is demand, as reflected in capacity utilisation, which is still around 75%. Hence, capex needs to percolate down to higher disposable incomes and increase demand.

Second, though we aspire for a lot of transitions, there is one important transition to make. As noted in the Economic Survey, 16.4% of the population is multidimensionally poor and an additional 18.7% is classified as vulnerable to multidimensional poverty. We need to transition out these two groups. Ultimately, that is *sabka vikaas.*

Poll-bound Karnataka gets ₹5,300 cr. for Upper Bhadra Project

Chief Minister Basavaraj Bommai on several occasions has urged the Centre to declare it a national project; the proposal is said to be awaiting the Union Cabinet's approval

Nagesh Prabhu
BENGALURU

Poll-bound Karnataka will receive a whopping assistance of ₹5,300 crore from the Centre for implementing the Upper Bhadra Project aimed at mitigating drought in the central region of the State.

In the Union Budget for 2023-24, Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman said, "In the drought-prone central region of Karnataka, an assistance of ₹5,300 crore will be given to Upper Bhadra Project to provide sustainable micro irrigation and filling up of surface tanks for drinking water."

Before Union Cabinet

Chief Minister Basavaraj Bommai, on several occasions, has urged the Centre to declare the Upper Bhadra Project as a national project. An official source in the State government told *The Hindu* that the Union Finance Ministry had approved the proposal to declare it as a national project. "The Union Cabinet note is ready. The Cabinet has to take a formal decision for declaring it as a national project," official sources said.

The allocation in the Union Budget is expected to boost the party's campaign right away during Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit to Tumakuru on February 6 and, in general, during the forthcoming Assembly elections.

Districts to benefit

The revised cost of the project, approved on December 16, 2020, is ₹21,473.67 crore and is expected to irrigate 5.57 lakh acres in four districts of Chitradurga, Davanagere, Chikkamagaluru and Tumakuru.

The primary objective of the project is providing a sustainable irrigation facility in the kharif season. The other objective is to recharge the groundwater table and provide drinking water by filling 367 tanks to their 50% capacity in drought-prone taluks of the districts.

Close to 75 lakh people residing in 787 villages of four districts are expected to benefit from the project. Villages and towns of Tarikere, Kadur, Hosadurga, Holalkere, Chitradurga, Challakere, Hiriyur, and Molakalmuru, Sira, Jagaluru, Chikkanayakanahalli and Pavagada benefit from the irrigation scheme.

Close to 75 lakh people residing in 787 villages of four districts are expected to benefit from the Upper Bhadra Project . FILE PHOTO

The project envisages lifting of 17.40 tmc of water from Tunga river in two phases to Bhadra reservoir. Again lifting of 28 tmc of water in the second stage from Bhadra reservoir to tunnel near Ajjampura and released into canals leading to Chitradurga and Tumakuru.

A total of 7720.36 acres would be acquired for the project and already 3922.13 acres had been awarded. A sum of ₹8,537.23 crore had been deposited for acquisition purposes.

First phase in 2008

The first phase of the project commenced in 2008. Till now, contract works worth ₹13,572.9 crore have been awarded and ₹10,268.83 crore has been released. The actual expenditure was ₹6,717.29 crore as on December 31, 2022, officials in the Water Resource Department said.

A sum of ₹712 crore and ₹410.9 crore had been spent under the Special Component Plan (SCP) for Scheduled Castes (SCs) and Tribal Sub Plan (TSP) for Scheduled Tribes (STs) in the project area.

Related works

Following requests by elected representatives, works related to roads, community halls, village and tank development and barrage cum bridge work had been taken up in the project areas.

Mr. Bommai thanked Prime Minister Narendra Modi for the allocation and said that the the project is crucial for the State as it will help meet the water requirements in the parched regions.

The Upper Bhadra Project

- Year of commencement: 2008
- Districts covered: Chitradurga, Davangere, Chikkamagaluru, Tumakuru
- Cost estimate: **₹21,473.67 crore**
- Extent of irrigation: **5.57 lakh acres**
- Contracts awarded: Worth **₹13,572.9 crore**
- Actual expenditure incurred: **₹6,717.29 crore** as on December 31, 2022

Source: Water Resources Department

'Allocation is only 25% of project cost'

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Pointing out that the Upper Bhadra scheme needed a total outlay of ₹23,000 crore for completion, Leader of the Opposition Siddaramaiah expressed disappointment that the Centre had given only ₹5,300 crore which would amount to a mere 25% of the project cost.

In an obvious reference to the allegations that "40% commission" is being demanded for clearance of pending bills of contractors, Mr. Siddaramaiah remarked that only a sum of about ₹3,000 crore would be left from this.

He also maintained that it was not possible to use whatever allocation is made to the Upper Bhadra Project till the row over B-Scheme of the Upper Krishna Project was settled. He also expressed disappointment that the budget had not made any allocations to the Mekedatu, UKP and Mahadayi projects.

'Budget growth-oriented, focuses on farmers'

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Chief Minister Basavaraj Bommai described the budget as a growth-oriented one that had provided for the well-being of farmers, women and the youth. The ₹5,300 crore provided for The Upper Bhadra project is a booster for Central Karnataka region, which has been drought-hit, he said.

"The budget has also given a major boost to infrastructure, including the Railways. The budget will help in creating employment on a largescale in the country," said Mr. Bommai. The Upper Bhadra project has been one of the important irrigation projects of the State and it will irrigate over one lakh hectares of land in drought-hit and dry land in Central Karnataka, he added.

BJP veteran leader B.S. Yediyurappa described the budget as a "futuristic" one that provided a clear roadmap to drive India's growth towards $5 trillion economy by 2025.

In a release, Mr. Yediyurappa said the Union Budget recognises the contribution of middle class by addressing their concerns apart from offering something for everyone.

BJP State General Secretary N. Ravikumar described the Central budget as one touches the lives of everyone and instils hope and confidence among everyone.

He said the budget had given priority for oppressed sections like SC/ST and OBCs.

Maintaining that it had focused on empowerment of farmers, he said the Union Budget had allocated ₹20 lakh crore for the agricultural sector.

He particularly welcomed the initiative to clean manholes through machines that would put an end to the inhuman practice of carrying night soil on head.

Continuation of *amir ke saath, garib ka vinaash* policy of 'trouble-engine' govt.: Siddaramaiah

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Ridiculing the Union Budget 2023 presented by Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman, Leader of the Opposition Siddaramaiah on Wednesday said the Union Budget was a continuation of the *amir ke saath and garib ka vinaash* anti-people policy being followed by the 'Trouble-Engine' government at the Centre for the last eight years.

Alleging that the present Budget had reduced the allocation for agriculture sector by ₹8,468.21 crore compared to last year, Mr. Siddaramaiah maintained that the budget had ignored the farm sector though it provided employment to 54% of people.

He alleged that Ms. Sitharaman had completely ignored Karnataka though she had been elected to the Rajya Sabha from here. He said the State government too had failed to draw the Centre's attention to the demands and issues concerning Karnataka. He alleged that the State government had shunned the practice of holding consultations with State MPs in Delhi ahead of the Union Budget as part of efforts to draw the Centre's attention on the issues related to the state.

Though the BJP had elected 25 Lok Sabha members and six Rajya Sabha members from Karnataka, none of them had managed to draw the Centre's attention to issues related to the State, he alleged.

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E-PROCUREMENT TENDER NOTICE

E-tender in two parts (Techno-commercial bid and price bid) are invited from eligible bidders for design, survey, supply, installation, testing, commissioning, operation & maintenance for 25 years (unless extended by both the parties on mutual agreement) from COD of grid connected solar power plants through RESCO mode, its associated 33kV or, 11kV line to connect the plant with various 33/11 kV Sub-Stations and remote monitoring system (RMS) of solar power plants for solarization of agriculture consumers connected on 11 kV feeders of various GSS in JDVVNL under KUSUM Scheme-Component C (Feeder level solarization). All the details regarding tender is available at web site www.energy.rajasthan.gov.in/jdvvnl, www.sppp.rajasthan.gov.in and www.eproc.rajasthan.gov.in vide NIT No. JDVVNL/SE(RA&C)/TN-DSM-01 In future, corrigendum/extension, if any, shall be published only at web site www.energy.rajasthan.gov.in/jdvvnl, http://www.sppp.rajasthan.gov.in and www.eproc.rajasthan.gov.in

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TENDER ALERT

1) Invitation for Expression of Interest (EOI) for hiring of spare fibre in Block to Gram Panchayat (GP) - EOI NO EIC-1/2023: Expression of Interest are invited from experienced Telecom/Internet service providers, national long distance operators/Cable TV operators or any other prospective customers having valid license from competent authority for leasing/hiring unused fibres in Bharat Net Phase-II Fibre Network created in Block to GP in Odisha **@ 6000/- excluding GST** per Fibre per KM per annum. The detailed proposal indicating use and no of fibres, period of use etc, should reach O/O EIC (Bharat Net Phase-II), OPTCL Hqrs., Technical Wing, Bhoinagar, Bhubaneswar-751022 by **17.02.2023.**

2) E-Tender Call Notice No.CPC-32/2022-23: Bids invited in e-tendering mode only under single stage two-bid system for "Rate contract and Enlistment of firms for online- on site Transformer oil Drying, De-Sluding and Re-refining " work for Transformers at various Grid Sub-Stations of OPTCL in the State of Odisha.

3)E-Tender Notice No.ED-SZ-BAM-04/2022-23: Bids invited in e-tendering mode only under single stage two-envelop system for **(I)**Construction of 01 number of 33kV dedicated feeder bay at 132/33kV Grid S/S, Phulbani, proposed for the medical campus at Phulbani, at an estimated cost of the package Rs. 48,95,318/- . (ii) Construction of 01 number of 33kV bay extension for feeding of dedicated 33kV megalift feeder from 220/33kV Grid S/S, Govindapalli, proposed for Saradaput megalift point, at an estimated cost of the package Rs.75,85,759/- on turnkey Contract basis under ED, Southern Zone, Berhampur.

4)E-Tender Notice No.ED-SZ-BAM-05/2022-23: Bids invited in e-tendering mode only under single stage two-envelop system for Construction of 3rd transformer Bay without supply of 01 number of new 132/33kV, 40MVA Power transformer at 132/33kV Grid Substation, Umerkote under EHT O&M Division, Jayanagar, at an estimate cost of the package Rs. 1,53,84,298/-in Nabarangapur district of Odisha on Turnkey contract basis under ED, Southern Zone, Berhampur.

5)E-Tender Call Notice No.CPC-34/2022-23: Bids invited from reputed manufacturers under two part bidding system in e-tendering mode only towards procurement of different ratings of Surge Arrestors for Sub-station and EHT Lines.

6)E-Tender Call Notice No.CPC-37/2022-23: Bids invited from reputed manufacturers under two part bidding system in e-tendering mode only towards procurement of 220V Battery sets and Battery chargers for Sub-stations.

Complete set bidding documents are available at **http:/tenderwizard.com/OPTCL** & **http://www.optcl.co.in**.

CAD-4700 OIPR-04011/11/0173/2223 HIPR-58/2022-23

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MRU/P&I/322/ 2023-24 30.01.2023

E-TENDER NOTICE

E-tenders are invited from eligible Agencies/Parties for the Supply of Green Maize Fodder, Baled Maize Silage wrapped with plastic film (50 Kg bale type) & Maize Silage filled in plastic bags (40 Kg bags) to the various Dairy Co-operative Societies under MRCMPU Ltd., For more details visit **www.malabarmilma.com, www.etenders.kerala.gov.in**
E-Tender Id : 2023_KCMMF_554025_1, 2023_KCMMF_554026_1, 2023_KCMMF_554027_1
Last Date: 21.02.2023, 17:00 Hrs.
(sd/-)
Managing Director

Karnataka Public works Department.
Tumkur Division, Karnataka Telephone: 0816-2272479,
No;EE/KPWD/Tmk/AE.1/T.No.62/2022-23 Dt: 27.01.2023
Invitation For Tenders (IFT) KW. 3
e-TENDER NOTIFICATION

On behalf of Government of Karnataka tenders are invited in Two cover system for Class-3 & above Contractors registered in PWD for 01 work under 5054-Appendix-E Works Head of accounts in the jurisidiction of Tumkur Division through e-procurement. The dates are published as below. (Amount Put to Tender Rs. 83.90 Lakhs, EMD Amt Rs.1,67,900/-)
1. Last date for tender information queries: **10.02.2023** : 16.00 2. Last date for submission of tender : **13.02.2023** 16.00 3. Date of opening the Technical bid. : **14.02.2023** : 16.30 4. Date of opening the Financial bid. : **15.02.2023 :** 16.30. **Note:** Turnover Certificate without UDI Number will not be considered.
Sd/- EXECUTIVE ENGINEER,
DIPR/TUM/920/KSMCA/2022-23 PWD DIVISION, TUMKUR.

GOVERNMENT OF KARANATAKA
Minor Irrigation and Ground Water Development Department. Office of the Executive Engineer, Minor Irrigation and Ground Water Development Department Division Koppal-583231
E-Mail:eemidnkst@rediffmail.com, P&F.No.08539:220054
No:EE/MI&GWDD/Koppal/PB/TP/2022-23/429
Dated:30.01.2023
INVITATION FOR SHORT TERM TENDER

The Executive Engineer, Minor Irrigation and Ground Water Development Department Division Koppal invites tenders from the eligible tenderers registered civil contractors as per standard bid documents of KW-4,2 on E-procurement portal for 02 no of tender works pertaining to Raichur district. The amount put to tender for the mentioned work of 22.55 and 168.49 Lakhs. The tenderers may submit tenders for the mentioned work through E-procurement portal only. **Single,Two cover** tender procedure as per rule 28 of the KTTP act shall be followed.

For more information the contractor can contact the under signed during office hours and all information regarding tenders can be had from website http://eproc.karnataka.gov.in. The tender documents can be downloaded from the above website address on or after **01-02-2023.** Last date & time for receipt of tender is **13-02-2023** time 17.30 hours, Pre bid meeting will be held on **09-02-2023,** 11.00 Hours, Date & time for opening of technical bid **15-02-2023** time 11.00 hours, date and time for opening of financial bid **17-02-2023** time 11.00 hours (If technical bid sanction is accorded by the competent authority).

Sd/-Executive Engineer Minor Irrigation and Ground Water Development Department Division Koppal.
DIPR/Koppal/611/KSMCA/2022-23

Government of Karnataka
The Executive Engineer, Public Works Department, Hassan Division, Hassan.
No.EE/PWD/HSN/JE-1/2022-23 DATED: 31.01.2023
SHORT TERM TENDER NOTIFICATION NO: 28 /2022-23, Dated: 31.01.2023

Tender is invited by the Public Works Department on behalf of the Governor of Karnataka, as per Karnataka Transparency in Public Procurement Act 1999 and Rules 2000, Standard Tender Document KW-1, KW-2, KW-3 & KW-4 from the eligible registered contractors of Karnataka PWD and the contractors belonging to Scheduled castes & Scheduked tribes shall be domicile of the State of Karnataka for more than 10 years through E-procurement pertains to 29 Works in Hassan District. In these tenders 3 tenders are reserved for SC Contractors and 2 tenders are reserved for ST Contractors. The minimum tender amount is Rs.5.00 lakhs and maximum tender amount Rs.272.14 lakhs under PWD Hassan Division jurisdiction. Last date of Receipt of tender is 10.02.2023. For more details visit http://www.eproc.karnataka.gov.in. or contact this office through Phone No. 08172-268437 or in person during office hours. **Sd/- Executive Engineer, PWD, Hassan Division, Hassan.**
ವಾಪಾಸಂ/ಹಿಸನ/ಹಾಸನ/ಎಂಒ/1028/2022–23

KARNATAKA POWER TRANSMISSION CORPORATION LIMITED
(CIN:U40109KA1999SGC025521)
No: SEE/Tr(M)/BMAZ(N)/EE(O)/AEE-3/F-85(12)/22-23/12545 Dt: 31.01.2023
SHORT-TERM TENDER NOTIFICATION

(1) KPTCL invites bid against enquiry no: KPTCL/SEE/TR(M)/BMAZ(N)/EE(O)/AEE-3/22-23/EPR-34/Call-2 Dt: 07.11.2022 for the work of **"Procurement of Desktop computers and printers for usage at various sub-stations coming under BMAZ(N).**

No: SEE/Tr(M)/BMAZ(N)/EE(O)/AEE-2/F-71(7,13&21)/22-23/12548-49 Dt: 31.01.2023
TENDER NOTIFICATION

(2) KPTCL invites bid against enquiry no: KPTCL/SEE/TR(M)/BMAZ(N)/EE(O)/AEE-2/22-23/EPR-38/Call-2 Dt: 28.11.2022 for the work of **"Replacement of existing age-old Control & Relay Panels at the following 66/11kV Sub-Stations pertains to TL&SS Division, Hebbal in the Jurisdiction of BMAZ North Circle Bengaluru on Total Turnkey basis". (1)** 2x31.5MVA Transformer-1 & Transformer-2 at 66/11kV 'C' Station. (2) 1x31.5MVA Transformer-1 at 66/11kv Banasawadi Sub-station. (3) 1x31.5MVA Transformer-2 & 66kV ITI-2 line (ITI-Pottery Road) at Pottery Road Sub-station.

No: SEE/Tr(M)/BMAZ(N)/EE(O)/AEE-2/F-76(8)/22-23/12551-52 Dt: 31.01.2023
TENDER NOTIFICATION

(3) KPTCL invites bid against enquiry no: KPTCL/SEE/TR(M)/BMAZ(N)/EE(O)/AEE-2/22-23/EPR-28/Call-6 Dt: 02.09.2022 for the work of **"Repairs to faulty 31.5MVA, 66/11kV Class, BBL make, Sl.No. 4934/20 Power Transformer failed at 66/11kV Banasawadi Sub-Station,** BMAZ North Circle, Bengaluru on Total Turnkey Basis on Percentage Tender Basis**".**

The detailed Notification regarding the subject tenders can be got by logging on or after for **Sl.No. (1) 01.02.2023 & for Sl.No. (2&3) 03.02.2023** to **https://www.kptcl.karnataka.gov.in** with hyper link **e-Procurement-KPTCL** or to **https://eproc.karnataka.gov.in**

Sd/- Superintending Engineer, Electy., Tr.(M), BMAZ North Circle, KPTCL, Office Complex, Ground Floor, A.R. Circle, Bangalore-09.

KARNATAKA TOURISM INFRASTRUCTURE LIMITED Karnataka One state. Many worlds. www.karnatakatourism.org
(A Govt. of Karnataka Undertaking)
#03, 04th Floor, Embassy Icon Building, Bangalore – 560001.
Phone: 080-22352525 . Fax: 080-22352626
No: KTIL/YO-2/21/2022-23 Date: 31.01.2023
NOTICE FOR INVITING TENDER

Office of Executive Engineer, Karnataka Tourism Infrastructure Limited, Engineering Unit, Bengaluru published the tender to develop Tourism activities at various parts of the state. The details of the tender and calendar of events are available at (e-Procurement Platform) **https://www.eproc.karnataka.gov.in.** e-procurement tender processing charges and EMD should be paid at e-Procurement Platform only.

1) Name of the work: Providing Hoarding at Various Tourist Destinations for publishing various tourist activities of Department of Tourism. **Estimated Cost : Rs.900.00 Lakhs**. Indent No.: **KTIL/MD/EE/AEE-1/AE-1/Hoarding/Part-II/2022-23 Date:23.01.2023. Calendar of Events**: 1) Last Date for submitting Proposals: **09.02.2023 upto 16.00 Hrs**. 2) Date & Time for Opening of Technical Proposal: **10.02.2023 at 17.00 Hrs**.

Postponement of Calendar of events (if any), subsequent notification, changes, amendments and selection / rejection of proposal shall be intimated only through e-Procurement portal and will not be published in newspapers. KTIL reserves the right to accept or reject any or all the tenders received without assigning any reasons thereof.

Sd/-
Sd/- Executive Engineer,
And Tender Inviting Authority
DIPR/CP/BCPL/4414/2022-23 **Karnataka Tourism Infrastructure Limited**

KARNATAKA POWER TRANSMISSION CORPORATION LIMITED
(CIN:U40109KA1999SGC025521)
No:CEE/TZB/SEE(O)/AE-1/2022-23/22443-45 Date: 01.02.2023
BRIEF TENDER NOTIFICATION (e-Procurement mode only)

KPTCL invites bids against the following enquiries:

(1) Enquiry No.: KPTCL/CEE/TR/BZ/PTK-243 Allimaranahalli for Providing additional 1x8MVA 66/11kV Power Transformer & construction of one no. of 66kV line terminal bay for terminating second circuit line at 66/11kV **Allimaranahalli** sub-station in Kanakapura Taluk Ramanagara Dist., and Making LILO arrangement to the existing 66/11V Allimaranahalli sub-station by strining 2nd circuit line from tap point of 66/11kV Allimanahalli sub-station to 66kV Ramanagara-Kanakapura SC line to 66/11kV Allimaranahalli sub- station on the exsiting DC towers using Coyote ACSR conductor for a distance of 0.831kms. Including supply of all materials/ equipment **(excluding power transformer & 11kV switchgear)** and erection (including Civil works) of all materials/equipments, testing and commissioning on **Partial Turnkey Basis.**

(2) Enquiry No: KPTCL/CEE/TR/BZ/PTK-244 Bijjahalli for Providing additional 1x8MVA 66/11kV Power Transformer at 66/11kV **Bijjahalli** sub-station in Kanakapura Taluk Ramanagar Dist., including supply of all materials/ equipment **(excluding power transformer & 11kV switchgear)** and erection (including Civil works) of all materials/equipments, testing and commissioning on **Partial Turnkey Basis.**

The detailed notification regarding the subject enquiry in the e-tendering process can be obtained by logging **in to** website **https://kptcl.karnataka.gov.in** with hyperlink **"e-Procurement-KPTCL"** or to **https://eproc.karnataka.gov.in on or after 08.02.2023.** Other details can be obtained from the office of the undersigned .

Sd/-Chief Engineer Electy.,Transmission Zone, KPTCL, Ananda Rao Circle, Bengaluru-560 009, Ph: 080-22282601.

Union Budget allocates ₹450 crore for suburban rail project

A total capital outlay of ₹1,350 crore has been approved for 2023-24, of which ₹900 crore has been approved to be raised through Internal and Extra Budgetary Resources

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Suburban railway work under way at Hebbal railway station in Bengaluru. SUDHAKARA JAIN

Though the State government was expecting much focus on Bengaluru in the Union Budget, the only project that has got significant allocation is the big-ticket Bengaluru Suburban Railway Project (BSRP).

While the Budget allocates ₹450 crore for the project, a total capital outlay of ₹1,350 crore has been approved for 2023-24, of which ₹900 crore has been approved to be raised through Internal and Extra Budgetary Resources (IEBR).

The State government had sought the Union Budget support to establish a fin-tech city, on the model of GIFT city in Gujarat, in a town on the outskirts of Bengaluru, to be developed as a satellite town. However, the proposal did not find a mention in the Budget presented on Wednesday.

With Prime Minister Narendra Modi assuring Bengalureans that his government would complete BSRP in 40 months last year, when he laid the foundation stone for the project, it has been high on the priority list of the State and the Union governments.

However, rail activists say the project that saw an inordinate delay in execution, received much needed push, but said the allocation could have been more.

While sanctioning the suburban rail project building, a network of 148 km in the city on four corridors was estimated to cost ₹15,767 crore.

Equity of both the governments is 40% and the remaining would be raised in the form of external borrowing. After clearing several hurdles, the KRIDE has taken up Baiyappanahalli to Chikkabanavara (25 km) corridor for construction.

The total length of this corridor is 25 km and there are 14 stations proposed.

Rail activist Sanjeev Dyamannavar said: "After months of delay, tender was finalised and construction works initiated. There is a need to expedite the project. Meanwhile, the KRIDE should float tender for all the pending corridors. The capital outlay is likely to give much needed fillip to the project. On other hand, in the forthcoming State Budget, the government should prioritise the project and allocate the required funds." Earlier, a deadline of 2026 was set to complete all the corridors.

Sources in KRIDE said that a realistic requirement has been indicated in the Budget.

"The KRIDE is in the process of raising funds required for the project through external agencies," said an official.

Sources said that the tender has already been floated for taking up 38 km Heelalige to Rajankunte. "The construction works have already begun on Baiyappanahalli to Chikkabanavara. The works have begun at Hebbal and ground works are on other stretches. For the next corridor, tender will be finalised after receiving invites. Last date for receiving applications is April 27."

Officials directed to check distribution of freebies and inducements

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Following reports of freebies being distributed by politicians to induce voters, Chief Electoral Officer (CEO) for Karnataka Manoj Kumar Meena on Wednesday directed officials from various departments to initiate legal action against the violators. At a State-level meeting held to review preparations for the forthcoming Assembly polls in the State, the CEO directed heads of various departments under the State and Central governments to expedite the poll preparations.

"We have learnt from media reports about voters being induced with various freebies including alcohol through coupons. Directing the Excise Department to keep a strict vigil over alcohol sales," the CEO said.

Calling upon officials of various departments to coordinate and check the distribution of freebies and various inducements to voters, the CEO said: "The Enforcement Directorate will initiate action against the cases booked by various departments. Strict vigilance should be in place to check the transport of expensive items including cash and gold ornaments apart from narcotic drugs. Special nodal officers should be deputed at railway stations, ports and airports."

Electoral rolls: Table-top verification of deletions to be completed in 10 days

Afshan Yasmeen
BENGALURU

Following directions from the Election Commission of India (ECI), the office of the Chief Electoral Officer (CEO) has taken up "table-top" verification of deletions in the voters' list of 170 constituencies.

These 170 constituencies are where more than 4% of the voters there have been deleted.

Manoj Kumar Meena, CEO for Karnataka, told *The Hindu* that following this verification, corrective measures will be initiated if procedural violations are found in the deletions.

"While this process has been completed in BBMP areas, it will be over in all districts in another 10 days," he said.

According to the revised final electoral rolls for 2023, the names of 6,18,965 voters have been deleted. The CEO said the names of voters detected under photo similar entries, demographically similar entries, dead, shifted, absentee, etc. have been deleted for cleansing of the electoral rolls.

While political parties have intensified their campaigns ahead of the Assembly polls in Karnataka, the Election Commission (EC) has begun poll preparations in full swing.

The 2018 elections were held on May 12 and the tenure of the current Assembly ends on May 24.

> We have estimated that at least five polling personnel are required for every polling station and government employees will be deployed. Training is a major component of election preparedness and the process of training election staff has already begun in the districts.
>
> **MANOJ KUMAR MEENA,**
> Chief Electoral Officer for Karnataka

Keeping the 2018 Assembly election date as the base, the EC is working on a war footing to ensure preparations are in place before the Election Commission of India announces the date.

While the final electoral rolls have been published by the commission on January 5, continuous updation of voters will continue till 10 days before the last date of filing nominations.

The CEO said control and ballot units have been dispatched and received by all districts.

"We are reviewing Voter-Verified Paper Audit Trail (VVPAT) and have commenced the first level checking (FLC) of Electronic Voting Machines (EVMs). This mechanical verification, which has been done in 10 districts as of now, will be completed in all districts by mid-February. Following this, a mop poll will be conducted in front of political parties," Mr. Meena said.

The process of physically verifying the 58,000 polling booths for assured minimum facilities such as water, power, entry/exit points, ventilation, and ramps is under way.

Nearly 3 lakh personnel are likely to participate in the entire election process. Mr. Meena said the commission is preparing an estimate of the total polling personnel required based on the government's Human Resource Management System (HRMS) database.

"We have estimated that at least five polling personnel are required for every polling station and government employees will be deployed. Training is a major component of election preparedness and the process of training election staff has already begun in the districts. Returning Officers and Assistant Election Returning Officers have been trained and they will in turn train the other staff," he said.

Mr. Meena said the process of identifying "expenditure sensitive" pockets, in every Assembly constituency as per existing evidence, where political parties try to induce voters, has also been initiated.

This year, SSLC preliminary exam to be conducted at taluk level

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Preliminary exam for the Secondary School Leaving Certificate (SSLC) students will be conducted at the taluk level this year.

The Karnataka School Examination and Assessment Board has ordered conduct of SSLC preliminary examination at Block Education Officers (BEOs) level for the academic year of 2022-23.

The Board will upload the question papers to the BEOs' login, which will be stored in the strongrooms. The Board had conducted State-level preliminary exam for the SSLC students last year.

Timings
BENGALURU

THURSDAY, FEB. 02	
RISE 06:46	SET 18:21
RISE 15:34	SET 04:04
FRIDAY, FEB. 03	
RISE 06:45	SET 18:21
RISE 16:26	SET 04:55
SATURDAY, FEB. 04	
RISE 06:45	SET 18:22
RISE 17:18	SET 05:44

Bengaluru Weather	max	min
Tumakuru	30	20
Mysuru	31	14
Bengaluru	29	15

Bengaluru Today
28°C The weather will be dry. Morning will be cool with mist and haze. Day will be comfortable. Night will be cool and hazy.

Bengaluru Tomorrow
29°C A dry weather to continue. Day will be slight warm. Night will be cool with haze and mist.

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THE HINDU
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PUBLIC NOTICE

It is hereby notified that, my clients have agreed to purchase the Schedule property from its owner **Sri.Jignesh T. Chowatia** S/o Sri.Tarachand M. Chowatia, residing at: No.33, "Suhani Villa", Middle School Road, V V Puram, Bangalore-560004.

Apart from the said Owner, if any other person/s have any manner of right, title and or interest or claim or charge or lien over the Schedule property or otherwise have any lawful objection/s for sale of the Schedule Property by the aforesaid Owner, they are hereby called upon to file their objection/s in writing, along with the photocopies of documents on which they rely, with the undersigned, within 14 days from the date of publication of this notice. Objection/s received thereafter will not be binding on my clients.

SCHEDULE

All that piece and parcel of the immovable property bearing Municipal No.114/13-1, PID No.41-22-114/13-1 (portion of old No.114/13), measuring East to West 46 ft and North to South 110 ft, with a building thereon, situated at Deepanjali Nagar layout (earlier Deevatige Ramanahalli Village, Kengeri Hobli), Bangalore and bounded on:

East by : Property of Praveen Taj
West by : Property bearing No.114/13
North by : 40 ft Road
South by : Property of Mr.Ziaulla

Sd/- Goutam Chand S.F
Advocate
Goutam Associates
No.60, 2nd Floor, Kanakapura Road,
Basavanagudi, Bangalore – 560 004

Government of Karnataka
DEPARTMENT OF MINES & GEOLOGY
#49, Khanija Bhavan, Race Course Road, Bengaluru-560001
E-mail: dir-mines@karnataka.gov.in

No. DMG-17012/9/2022/2022-23 **Date: 31.01.2023**
C. No. 747347

NOTIFICATION AND NOTICE INVITING TENDER
"Invitation of bids for grant of Composite Licence for 3 Gold blocks"

In exercise of the powers conferred under Section 11 of the Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulation) Act, 1957 and in accordance with the Minerals (Evidence of Mineral Contents) Rules, 2015 and the Mineral (Auction) Rules, 2015 and amendments notified thereunder, the Government of Karnataka is conducting "second attempt" of 3 gold blocks for grant of Composite Licence through auction and hereby invites tenders for electronic auction.

List of mineral blocks for Composite License through auction

S. No.	Name of the block	District	Mineral	Concession Area (in Sq. Km)	Tender fee
1.	Sirigiri Gold Block	Ballari	Gold	25.10	INR 2,00,000/- + 18% GST
2.	Basavanagudda Gold Block	Tumakuru & Chitradurga	Gold	25.019	INR 2,00,000/- + 18% GST
3.	Uduvalli Gold Block	Chitradurga	Gold	6.75	INR 2,00,000/- + 18% GST

Any person, firm or company who satisfies the eligibility criteria can participate in the auction. Technical and financial bids for the above listed blocks are invited online. Apart from the online Technical Bids, bidders will have to submit duly executed original physical copies of their Technical Bids to the Tender Inviting Authority i.e. Director, Department of Mines and Geology, Government of Karnataka.

Eligibility conditions, terms and conditions, date and time for participating in the electronic auction are provided in the Tender Document. Tender Documents, notifications, updates and other details for the e-auction process shall be available in electronic form only at the website of MSTC Ltd (**http://www.mstcecommerce.com/ auctionhome/mlcl/index.jsp**).

Interested and eligible bidders can register themselves at the above website. On successful registration, bidders will obtain login ID and password, which are necessary for participation in the e-auction process. Model Tender Document and summary of the block shall be available free of cost at the website of MSTC Limited (**http://www.mstcecommerce.com/auctionhome/mlcl/index.jsp**). For participating in the bidding process, the registered bidders will have to purchase the block specific tender document at the website of MSTC Ltd as per fees mentioned in the table for each block.

The GST at the rate of 18% on the purchase of tender document shall be applicable. The GST applicable is to be paid by the prospective bidder itself payable under the Reverse Charge Mechanism. The prospective bidder shall be solely responsible for remitting the GST as per applicable law and statutory liability in this regard will be responsibility of prospective bidder and no liability whatsoever shall be borne by the DMG Karnataka /MSTC.

The sale of tender document shall commence from **01 February 2023**. Last date for sale of tender document at the website of MSTC Ltd is **20 March 2023**. Last date for submission of Technical Bids plus the Initial Price Offers at the website of MSTC Ltd is **27 March 2023** (up to 17:00 hours IST). Physical copies of the Technical Bids must reach the Tender Inviting Authority i.e. Director, Department of Mines and Geology, Government of Karnataka by 17:00 hours IST on **27 March 2023.**

Sd/-
Director

DIPR/CP/4411/Zenkar/2022-23

Government of Karnataka
DEPARTMENT OF MINES & GEOLOGY
#49, Khanija Bhavan, Race Course Road, Bengaluru-560001
E-mail: dir-mines@karnataka.gov.in

No. DMG-17012/23/2021/2022-23 **Date: 31.01.2023**
C. No. 655620

NOTIFICATION AND NOTICE INVITING TENDER
"Invitation of bids for grant of Composite Licence for 5 gold blocks"

In exercise of the powers conferred under Section 11 of the Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulation) Act, 1957 and in accordance with the Minerals (Evidence of Mineral Contents) Rules, 2015 and the Mineral (Auction) Rules, 2015 and amendments notified thereunder, the Government of Karnataka is conducting "second attempt" of 5 gold blocks for grant of Composite Licence through auction and hereby invites tenders for electronic auction.

List of mineral blocks for Composite License through auction

S. No.	Name of the block	District	Mineral	Concession Area (in Sq. Km)	Tender fee
1.	Mududi Gold Block	Hassan	Gold	40.00	INR 2,00,000/- + 18% GST
2.	Kanivehalli Gold Block	Davangere & Vijayanagara	Gold	30.78	INR 2,00,000/- + 18% GST
3.	Kakol Gold Block	Haveri	Gold	29.06	INR 2,00,000/- + 18% GST
4.	Maruthipura Gold Block	Dharwad and Haveri	Gold	28.92	INR 2,00,000/- + 18% GST
5.	Katanahatti Gold Block	Chitradurga	Gold	25.22	INR 2,00,000/- + 18% GST

Any person, firm or company who satisfies the eligibility criteria can participate in the auction. Technical and financial bids for the above listed blocks are invited online. Apart from the online Technical Bids, bidders will have to submit duly executed original physical copies of their Technical Bids to the Tender Inviting Authority i.e. Director, Department of Mines and Geology, Government of Karnataka.

Eligibility conditions, terms and conditions, date and time for participating in the electronic auction are provided in the Tender Document. Tender Documents, notifications, updates and other details for the e-auction process shall be available in electronic form only at the website of MSTC Ltd **(http://www.mstcecommerce.com/ auctionhome/mlcl/index.jsp)**.

Interested and eligible bidders can register themselves at the above website. On successful registration, bidders will obtain login ID and password, which are necessary for participation in the e-auction process. Model Tender Document and summary of the block shall be available free of cost at the website of MSTC Limited (**http://www.mstcecommerce.com/auctionhome/mlcl/index.jsp**). For participating in the bidding process, the registered bidders will have to purchase the block specific tender document at the website of MSTC Ltd as per fees mentioned in the table for each block.

The GST at the rate of 18% on the purchase of tender document shall be applicable. The GST applicable is to be paid by the prospective bidder itself payable under the Reverse Charge Mechanism. The prospective bidder shall be solely responsible for remitting the GST as per applicable law and statutory liability in this regard will be responsibility of prospective bidder and no liability whatsoever shall be borne by the DMG Karnataka /MSTC.

The sale of tender document shall commence from **01 February 2023**. Last date for sale of tender document at the website of MSTC Ltd is **20 March 2023**. Last date for submission of Technical Bids plus the Initial Price Offers at the website of MSTC Ltd is **27 March 2023** (up to 17:00 hours IST). Physical copies of the Technical Bids must reach the Tender Inviting Authority i.e. Director, Department of Mines and Geology, Government of Karnataka by **17:00 hours IST on 27 March 2023.**

Sd/-
Director

DIPR/CP/4412/Zenkar/2022-23

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After assurance of gratuity, anganwadi workers call off strike

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Upon assurance by the State government to provide gratuity, anganwadi workers, who were on an indefinite strike from January 23, called off their strike on Wednesday.

The workers had set a 48-hour deadline on Monday for their demands to be met, failing which they had threatened to shift their sit-in protest from Freedom Park to Chief Minister Basavaraj Bommai's residence.

Meeting held

Hours before the deadline ended on Wednesday, senior officials of the government held a meeting with the representatives of the Karnataka State Anganwadi Employees' Association and the impasse was resolved.

"The meeting with senior officers of the government was successful. The Finance Department has agreed to provide gratuity on the basis of the Supreme Court order on the matter and Gratuity Act, 1972. They have assured us that an order will be passed soon. The government has fulfilled some of our major demands. Therefore, we decided to call off the strike," said S. Varalakshmi, president, Karnataka State Anganwadi Employees' Association.

Anganwadi workers were on an indefinite strike from January 23. K. MURALI KUMAR

Woman, daughter killed after truck falls on their car

47-year-old IT employee was driving her 15-year-old daughter to school, when the accident occurred on Bannerghatta Main Road

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

A 47-year-old woman and her 15-year-old daughter were crushed to death in a freak accident, when a cement-laden concrete mixer truck toppled on their car on Bannerghatta Main Road on Wednesday.

Passers-by at the scene of the accident in Bengaluru.

Gayathri Kumar, 47, an employee with an IT company, was driving the car to drop her daughter, Samatha Kumar, 15, to Sherwood High, the school where she was studying in Class X. According to the police, Ms. Gayathri, wife of Sunil Kumar, also an IT professional, was living in a residential apartment in Kaggalipura. The incident occurred around 8.30 a.m. The truck was being driven in a rash and negligent manner on Byaladamarada Doddi on Bannerghatta Road, claimed the police. The driver, while negotiating a curve, lost control and the truck toppled on the car, crushing the duo, added the police.

Passers-by could not pull out the victims trapped in the mangled remains of the car and alerted the police.

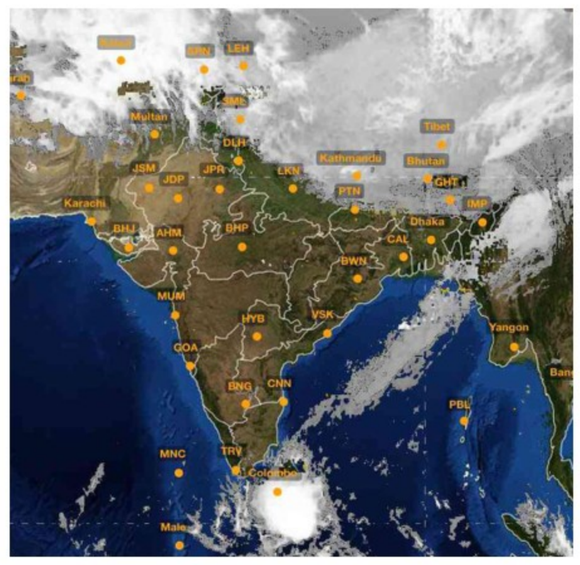
The Bannerghatta police, with the help of a crane and JCB, pulled up the collapsed truck and later took out the bodies of the victims and later shifted them to a nearby hospital. The driver, who escaped with minor injuries, had fled from the scene.

The police have registered a case of rash and negligent driving and causing death due to negligence against the truck driver and efforts are on to track him down.

Traffic on the busy Bannerghatta Road was disrupted for some time during the morning peak hours on Wednesday. It was cleared after the police cleared the truck.

WEATHERWATCH

Rainfall, temperature & air quality in select metros yesterday



TEMPERATURE DATA: IMD, POLLUTION DATA: CPCB, MAP: INSAT/IMD (TAKEN AT 18.00 HRS)

Forecast for Thursday: Heavy rainfall likely at isolated places over south Tamil Nadu. Thunderstorm accompanied with lightning likely at isolated places over Tamil Nadu, Puducherry, Karaikal, Kerala, Mahe and Lakshadweep

CITY	RAIN	MAX	MIN	CITY	RAIN	MAX	MIN
Agartala	—	24.6	17.6	Kozhikode	—	35.4	25.0
Ahmedabad	—	27.0	13.4	Kurnool	—	33.1	19.2
Aizawl	—	28.5	11.5	Lucknow	—	20.0	12.4
Allahabad	—	22.4	12.4	Madurai	—	33.4	22.6
Bengaluru	—	29.0	15.4	Mangaluru	—	35.0	22.8
Bhopal	—	—	10.8	Mumbai	—	34.0	22.4
Bhubaneswar	—	32.3	20.2	Mysuru	—	30.7	14.0
Chandigarh	—	24.3	10.0	New Delhi	—	21.6	8.6
Chennai	—	31.2	24.4	Patna	—	23.3	15.1
Coimbatore	—	32.7	19.5	Port Blair	—	30.8	26.0
Dehradun	—	25.6	11.0	Puducherry	—	28.2	22.3
Gangtok	—	17.5	9.0	Pune	—	28.6	17.7
Goa	—	34.6	22.2	Raipur	—	30.6	18.3
Guwahati	—	29.0	16.9	Ranchi	—	27.3	13.7
Hubballi	—	33.0	19.0	Shillong	—	21.0	10.7
Hyderabad	—	29.9	20.0	Shimla	—	16.7	5.2
Imphal	—	25.9	9.4	Srinagar	—	8.0	0.4
Jaipur	—	23.0	7.9	Thiruvananthapuram	5	32.1	24.0
Kochi	—	32.2	25.4	Tiruchi	—	30.3	23.6
Kohima	—	—	8.8	Vijayawada	—	31.4	22.4
Kolkata	—	27.5	20.4	Visakhapatnam	—	31.0	23.4

(Rainfall data in mm; temperature in Celsius)

Pollutants in the air you are breathing

CITIES	SO_2	NO_2	CO	PM2.5	PM10	CODE
Ahmedabad	.11	..17	.24	...119	...124	
Bengaluru	...8	..—	.60	...140	...146	
Chennai	.25	.39	.46	...187	...122	
Delhi	.29	..77	.80	...189	...225	
Hyderabad	...7	..45	.47	...169	...152	
Kolkata	.15	.13	.24	...202	.....—	
Lucknow	.11	..23	.51	...116	...119	
Mumbai	.31	270	.61	...363	...197	
Pune	116	166	110	...306	...175	
Visakhapatnam	..—	..39	.49	.....—	...122	

Yesterday

In observation made at 4.00 p.m., Byrnihat, Assam recorded an overall air quality index (AQI) score of 402 indicating an unhealthy level of pollution. In contrast, Nandesari, Gujarat recorded a healthy AQI score of 11

Air Quality Code: Poor, Moderate, Good (Readings indicate average AQI)

SO_2: Sulphur Dioxide. Short-term exposure can harm the respiratory system, making breathing difficult. It can affect visibility by reacting with other air particles to form haze and stain culturally important objects such as statues and monuments.

NO_2: Nitrogen Dioxide. Aggravates respiratory illness, causes haze to form by reacting with other air particles, causes acid rain, pollutes coastal waters.

CO: Carbon monoxide. High concentration in air reduces oxygen supply to critical organs like the heart and brain. At very high levels, it can cause dizziness, confusion, unconsciousness and even death.

PM2.5 & PM10: Particulate matter pollution can cause irritation of the eyes, nose and throat, coughing, chest tightness and shortness of breath, reduced lung function, irregular heartbeat, asthma attacks, heart attacks and premature death in people with heart or lung disease

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PERSONAL

CHANGE OF NAME

I, AMEET Kumar Pagaria, S/o Kamal Singh Pagaria, R/a Flat No.902, 9th Floor, Birla Apple Spire, 127, Pantharapalya, Bangalore-560039 have changed my name to Amit Pagaria vide affidavit dt: 01.02.2023 sworn before Notary L.Gopalakrishna, B'lore

I, JASPER Krubagaran, S/o Pramod Kumar & Grace Philomena, R/o #38, Ground Floor, Varanasi, Jinkethimmanahalli, Bidarahalli Hobli, Bangalore-560036 have changed my name to Jasper Prashanth vide affidavit dt: 01.02.2023 sworn before Notary L.Gopalakrishna, B'lore.

I, Manjula D G D/o Govindaraju D H , residing at #20 Varahagiri 10th Cross Annyappa Layout , J P Nagar 1st Phase, Bengaluru, Karnataka - 560078, changed my name to Mythri Raj for all purposes in future.

I, DANISH Khan, S/o Amanullah Imran Khan, R/a No.221, 1st Floor, 4th Block, H.B.R.Layout, 2nd B Crs, Kalyannagar, Bangalore-560043 have changed my name to Imran Khan Danish vide affidavit dt: 17.01.2023 sworn before Notary Bhagya Kumar.N, B'lore

HEALTH

BABY MASSAGE Coconut Milk Oil by Parisudham Oils Door delivery contact or text 9947000005

PUBLIC NOTICE

BEFORE THE NATIONAL COMPANY LAW TRIBUNAL, BENGALURU BENCH, AT BENGALURU
IN THE MATTER OF SCHEME OF AMALGAMATION OF SIMPLER CONSULTING INDIA PRIVATE LIMITED AND TRUVEN HEALTH ANALYTICS INDIA PRIVATE LIMITED AND FIBERLINK SOFTWARE PRIVATE LIMITED AND SANOVI TECHNOLOGIES PRIVATE LIMITED WITH STERLING COMMERCE SOLUTIONS INDIA PRIVATE LIMITED AND THEIR RESPECTIVE SHAREHOLDERS
CP (CAA) No. 01/BB/2023
C/W
CA (CAA) NO. 47/BB/ 2022
SIMPLER CONSULTING INDIA PRIVATE LIMITED
CIN: U74999KA2012FTC145074
Registered office No 12, Subramanya Arcade, Bannerghatta Road, Bengaluru - 560 029
...PETITIONER COMPANY NO. 1/ TRANSFEROR COMPANY 1
TRUVEN HEALTH ANALYTICS INDIA PRIVATE LIMITED
CIN: U74999KA2012FTC143105
Registered office No 12, Subramanya Arcade, Bannerghatta Road, Bengaluru - 560 029
... PETITIONER COMPANY NO. 2/ TRANSFEROR COMPANY 2
FIBERLINK SOFTWARE PRIVATE LIMITED,
CIN: U72900KA2005FTC036388
Registered office No 12, Subramanya Arcade, Bannerghatta Road, Bengaluru - 560 029
... PETITIONER COMPANY NO. 3/ TRANSFEROR COMPANY 3
SANOVI TECHNOLOGIES PRIVATE LIMITED,
CIN: U64203KA1999PTC040905
Registered office No 12, Subramanya Arcade, Bannerghatta Road, Bengaluru - 560 029
... PETITIONER COMPANY NO. 4/ TRANSFEROR COMPANY 4
STERLING COMMERCE SOLUTIONS INDIA PRIVATE LIMITED
CIN: U72200KA2000PTC028101
Registered office No 12, Subramanya Arcade, Bannerghatta Main Road Bangalore 560 029
.. PETITIONER COMPANY NO. 5/ TRANSFEREE COMPANY
NOTICE
A Petition under Sections 230 and 232 of the Companies Act, 2013 for sanctioning the Scheme of Amalgamation of Simpler Consulting India Private Limited and Truven Health Analytics India Private Limited and Fiberlink Software Private Limited and Sanovi Technologies Private Limited with Sterling Commerce Solutions India Private Limitedand their respective shareholders was presented by the Petitioner Companies on 21.12.2022 and the said Petition came up for admission on 23.01.2023 and is fixed for hearing before the Hon'ble National Company Law Tribunal, Bengaluru Bench on 06.03.2023. Any person desirous of supporting or opposing the said Petition should send to the Petitioner's advocate at the address mentioned below, notice of such intention, in writing, signed by him/her or his/her advocate, with his/her full name and address, to reach the Petitioner's Advocate, not later than two (2) days before the date fixed for hearing of the Petition. Where he/she seeks to oppose the petition, the grounds of opposition or a copy of the affidavit, shall be furnished with such notice. A copy of the petition will be furnished by the undersigned to any person requiring the same, on payment of the prescribed charges for the same.
Date : 02.02.2023
Place : Bengaluru
SAJI P JOHN
SPJ Legal, Advocates
Unit no 306, 3rd Floor, #30, Prestige Meridian II, MG Road, Bengaluru-560 001
Ph: +91 9845209798
Email : saji@spjlegal.com

PUBLIC NOTICE

Our Client intends to purchase the Schedule Property from its Owner **Sri. Gopalakrishna G.** son of late Sri. Govindaraja Iyengar, aged about 60 years, residing at 4447 Clarke Drive Troy MI 48085 USA, having acquired the same under a Deed of Gift dated 12th July 2002 executed by Sri. Gopalakrishna G. mother Smt. Shringaramma wife of late Sri. Govindaraja Iyengar, registered as Document No.5524 of 2002-03 in Book I, stored in CD No. 52, in the office of the Senior Sub Registrar, KR Puram, Bangalore.
Any person having any claim or charge over the Schedule Property shall lodge their claim or objections, if any, together with documentary proof to the undersigned **within 10 days** from the date of this notice failing which it would be deemed that there is no claim, charge or encumbrance whatsoever on the Schedule Property and further our Client can proceed to purchase the above Schedule Property and any subsequent claim or objections in this regard shall be deemed to have been waived.
SCHEDULE PROPERTY
All the piece and parcel of RESIDENTIAL property bearing No.7 CM 218, situated at 7 C Main Road, I Block, HRBR Layout, Kalyananagar, Bengaluru - 560043 measuring East to West 40 feet (forty feet) and North to South 30 feet (thirty feet) in all 1,200 sq. ft. with building standing thereon measuring 669 sq ft and bounded on:
EAST by : Site No. 8 M 217;
WEST by : 7 'C' Main Road;
NORTH by : Site No. 7 CM 220; and
SOUTH by : Site No. 7 CM 216.
LEX ASTRA
RAMESH .T , Partner, LEX ASTRA PARTNERS & ASSOCIATES, office at High Point 3, Flat 3111, 11th Floor, 45, Palace Road, Bangalore 560001. Mobile 9845329685

TENDER INVITED (E-PROCUREMENT)

Executive Engineer, Panchayat Raj Engineering Division, Belagavi hereby invited tender from Registered Contractors for the Item rates through E Portal. There are total 7 work have been called, Standard of tender documents KW-1, 3 for price of Highest and Lowest Estimated cost Rs. 99.00 Lakhs and Rs. 8.00 Lakh respectively and also Highest and Lowest EMD Rs. 1,98,000.00 and Rs. 20,000.00 for work. The last date for submission of any quarries is 06-02-2023 17.28 PM, the last date for submission of tender bid is on 06-02-2023: 17.30 PM. Opening of technical bid is on 08-02-2023: 11.00 AM. and expected Financial bid will be opened on 08-02-2023 11:30 AM. For any other information / clarifications please contact the below signed office, and also search internet for E-Portal website **http://e-proc.karnataka.gov.in**
Sd/- **EXECUTIVE ENGINEER**
P.R.E. Division, Belagavi
DIPO/BGM/1650/2022-23

TUNGABHADRA BOARD: TB DAM
e-Procurement Notice IFB Nos.168/2022-23 to 174/2022-23 Dt.01.02.2023
Tender for total 07 Nos. Package Works are invited in respect of HW & HLC Division, TB Dam and LLC Division, Ballari through `e-Procurement'.

Bid Document downloading Start Date & Time:	02.02.2023 at 11.00 AM
Bid Document downloading End Date & Time :	16.02.2023 at 3.00 PM
Bid Submission End Date & Time :	16.02.2023 at 5.30 PM
Date of opening of PQ Stage:	16.02.2023 at 6.00 PM
Date of opening of Commercial Stage* :	23.02.2023 at 11.00 AM
Date of opening of TQ Stage:	23.02.2023 at 3.00 PM

Further details can be seen @ https://tender.apeprocurement.gov.in
* Commencement of Reverse Tendering
Ph: 08394 – 259114
Fax 08394 - 259167
Sd/- **Superintending Engineer**
I.B, TB Board, TB Dam

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Tamil Nadu. Ph.: 04324 - 277001 (10 Lines)
Unit - 2: Mondipatti - 621 306, Trichy District, Tamil Nadu.
Ph.: 04332 - 261600
NOTICE INVITING TENDERS

Tender No.	Material Description	Due date
222313 006657	Supply and Replacement of Electrostatic Precipitator Field #1&2 Internals in Power Boiler #7 at TNPL Unit - I.	17.02.2023
222323 004070	Heavy Duty LDPE Shrink Film of various sizes	16.02.2023
Email	222313006657 - pmd4@tnpl.co.in 222323004070 - purchasepacking.u2@tnpl.co.in	

Corrigendum if any will be issued in TNPL Website & NIC portal only. Detailed Terms & conditions are available in tender document at our websites: **www.tnpl.com / www.tenders.tn.gov.in / www.tntenders.gov.in/nicgep/app**
DIPR/626/Tender/2023
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TAMIL NADU GENERATION AND DISTRIBUTION CORPORATION LIMITED
E-tenders through e-procurement platform at **https://tntenders.gov.in/nicgep/app** as per the instructions in the tender specifications Coal(Ship)–122 &123 Dated 27.01.2023 for time chartering of One Self-Trimming Panamax or Kamsarmax Gearless/Geared offered as Gearless Bulk Carrier for coastal movement of coal by TANGEDCO:

Sl. No.	Specification No.	Description of Work/Materials	Due date & Time for submission of e-tender
1	Coal (Ship) - 122 Dt.27.1.2023	TIME CHARTERING OF ONE NO. SELF-TRIMMING PANAMAX OR KAMSARMAX GEARLESS/GEARED OFFERED AS GEARLESS Bulk Carrier WITH THE LAYDAYS FROM 20TH FEBRUARY 2023 to 5TH MARCH 2023 FOR 9 MONTHS + 4 MONTHS CHOPTION + 3 MONTHS CHOPTION +/-15 DAYS CHOPTION.	13.02.2023upto 14:30 hrs.
2	Coal (Ship) - 123 Dt.27.1.2023	TIME CHARTERING OF ONE NO. SELF-TRIMMING PANAMAX OR KAMSARMAX GEARLESS/GEARED OFFERED AS GEARLESS Bulk Carrier WITH THE LAYDAYS FROM 24TH FEBRUARY 2023 to 10TH MARCH 2023 FOR 9 MONTHS + 4 MONTHS CHOPTION + 3 MONTHS CHOPTION +/-15 DAYS CHOPTION.	13.02.2023 upto 14:30 hrs.

Submission of E-Tender: THROUGH THIS HYPERLINK **https://tntenders.gov.in/nicgep/app**
Date & Time of commencement of download of Tender Specifications Coal(Ship)-122 &123 **dt.:27.01.2023 : 14:30 Hrs** on **02.02.2023**
Soft copy of Tender Specifications:
The tender specifications can be downloaded from TANGEDCO website **www.tangedco.gov.in,** from TamilNadu Government Website i.e. **www.tenders.tn.gov.in** and from National Informatics Center website **https://tntenders.gov.in/nicgep/app** free of cost.
Tenders will be opened: Through the NIC portal **https://tntenders.gov.in/nicgep/app**
DIPR/652/Tender/2023
CHIEF ENGINEER/MECH/COAL TANGEDCO/CHENNAI-2
"சோதனை கடந்து சுதந்திரம் அடைந்தோம், சாதனை புரிந்து சரித்திரம் படைப்போம்."

KERALA MEDICAL SERVICES CORPORATION LTD
(DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH & FAMILY WELFARE, GOVT. OF KERALA)
Head Office : Thycaud, Thiruvananthapuram-14,
(Telephone No. 0471-2945600, 2945646)
E-mail : oncocare@kmscl.kerala.gov.in,
website : www.kmscl.kerala.gov.in, CIN No. U24233KL2007SGC021616
No.KMSCL/OD/AHD/269/2022 Date : 01.02.2023
E- TENDER NOTICE
Online bids are invited from manufacturers/ loan licensees on behalf of Animal Husbandry Department, Govt of Kerala for the procurement of Veterinary Medicines for the year 2022-23.

Sl. No.	Tender No. and Date	Category	No. of items
1.	KMSCL/AHD-VET/RC/2023/004 dtd. 01.02.2023	Veterinary Medicines	57

The last date and time of online uploading of tender will be 20.02.2023, 5.00 pm. The date and time of opening of Technical bid will be 24.02.2023 11.00 am. Tender shall be downloaded and submitted online through the e-tender portal **www.etenders.kerala.gov.in.**
(Sd/-) MANAGING DIRECTOR (Tender Inviting Authority)

KRISHNA BHAGYA JALA NIGAM LIMITED
(A Government of Karnataka Under Taking)
Office of The Executive Engineer, KBJNL NRBC Division No.5
Rodalbanda-584127, Tq :Lingasugur, Dist: Raichur
KBJNL/NRBC/D-5/PB /2022-23/ 755 Dtd:-27.01.2023
SHORT TERM TENDER NOTIFICATION
(E-TENDERING MODE ONLY)
On behalf of the Managing Director, KBJNL, Bangalore, the Executive Engineer KBJNL, NRBC Division No-5, Rodalabanda invites two cover percentage tendersfrom eligible contractors for SCP-TSP Borewell works for the year 2022-23.
1) Cover Type: Two cover 2) No of works: 2 3) Indent No's: 23599 & 23600, 4) Access date for applying for tender : 31-01-2023 5) Date of pre bid meeting: 03-02-2023 at 11.00 AM 6) Last date for applying for tender: 08-02-2023 till 5.00PM 7) Opening of Technical Bid: 09-02-2023 at 05-30PM 8) Opening of Financial Bid 13-02-2023 at 11.00 AM (Tentative)
The tenders will be opened in this officeas mentioned in the above dates. Further information can be had from the office of undersigned during the office hours & also from e-procurement portal.
Sd/- Executive Engineer
KBJNL NRBC Div No-05, Rodalbanda
DIP/Raichur/577/ K.S.M.C&A/2022-23

Government of Karnataka
Office of the Executive Engineer, Public Works Department, Division Ballari
Email: ee_pwdbellary@yahoo.com Telephone No: 08392 -266123
No: EE/PWD/BD/TS-3/2022-23/5296 Dated: 25-01-2023
Short Term Tender Notification (Two Cover System)
The Executive Engineer, Public works Department Division, Ballari invites the tenders for the works detailed in the table from the eligible contractors registered in Karnataka Public Works Department, through e-procurement portal. Two cover tender procedure as per KTPP Act shall be followed. The tender documents can be downloaded through the web-site http://eproc. karnataka.gov.in. For any additional information the tenderers may contact the office of the undersigned during office working hours. **TABLE**

Sl No	Details of Works	Amount of Estimate (Rs. in Lakhs)
1)	KPWD/2022-23/BD/WORK_INDENT163564	443.017
2)	KPWD/2022-23/BD/WORK_INDENT163585	495.84

Note : Any changes either in tender dates or any other conditions, tenderers can view in e_Procurement Portal.
1)Venue, Date and time of Pre Bid Meeting for the work of Sl No.(01) to (02): **01-02-2023 at 11.00 AM in the office of the Executive Engineer, PWD Division, Ballari.** 2)Last dates for queries (through e-procurement portal: **04-02-2023 upto 12.00 Hours.** 3)Last date for submission of tenders through e-procurement portal: **08-02-2023 upto 16.00 Hours.** 4)Date and time of opening of Technical Bids: **09-02-2023 at 16.30 Hours in the office of the Executive Engineer, PWD Division, Ballari**
DIPR/Ballari/866/MCA/2022-23 Sd/- Executive Engineer, PWD Division, Ballari.

OBITUARY & REMEMBRANCE

DEATH

Obituary

02.12.1942 — 30.01.2023

Manjula Balakrishnan
W/o. Late S.R. Balakrishnan

"Departed from the earthly abode, she touched many lives with grace. You will always live in our hearts"

Deeply Mourned by

Sekhar & Manjula | Swarna & Sundar | Arjun & Riyo
Anjana & Chandroo | Karthik & Mona | Nandini & Matt
Bhavani & Martijn | Grandchildren
Members of the Alathur family | Relatives | Friends

DEATH ANNIVERSARIES

1st DEATH ANNIVERSARY

Mrs. V.S. MEENAKSHI, B.A., B.T.
Retd. Personnel Manager, CMDA
04.06.1945 - 02.02.2022
Living with her memories
S. Rajasekaran (Husband)
R. Narendiran (Son)
R. Maheswari (Daughter)
V. Archana (Daughter-in-law)
N. Nandan (Grand son)

SECOND ANNIVERSARY

Dr. N. LAKSHMANAN
Former Director, CSIR-SERC
Remembering you every day
Dr.Gomati Lakshmanan
Family & Relatives
+91-98415 57272

DEATH

GIRIJA BHAMANI RANGASWAMY, 74 years (Ex– Central Bank of India) W/o. K.C.Rangaswamy passed away on 1st Feb–2023 morning after a brief illness at Chennai. Last rites at Besant Nagar Crematorium on 2nd–Feb–2023 (Noon). Mourned by: K.C.Rangaswamy, K.C.R. Anand, Neethi Anand, Rhea Anand. Tel: 6381085371/ 9849525596/ 9849779471

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From Page One

Schemes announced ahead of LS election

Polls apart, the Union Budget's grand plan to ramp up infrastructure capex to ₹10 lakh crore in the hope that it gives greater traction to a revival in private investments will hinge on the States – which have been offered ₹1.3 lakh crore in the form of 50-year interest-free loans – doing their bit, and Indian industry being bold enough to take risks during a tumultuous, unpredictable period also marked by rising interest rates.

Savings scheme for senior citizens

The deposit limit on savings schemes for senior citizens was doubled to ₹30 lakh and a new one-time small savings scheme was also announced for women to invest upto ₹2 lakh with 7.5% returns assured for two years.

An uptick in small savings collections will also help the government fund its fiscal deficit target of 5.9% of GDP in the coming year (from the 6.4% estimated in 2022-23), with net market borrowings pegged at ₹11.8 lakh crore, Ms. Sitharaman said.

While the Economic Survey projected a 6.5% growth for the year ahead, the Budget estimates a nominal GDP growth of 10.5% for its revenue calculations. Finance Secretary T.V. Somanathan explained that this could be derived from any combination of real growth and inflation, and was not a yardstick for hopes about either.

PMAY share rises by 66% in Union Budget

"Like the Rural Infrastructure Development Fund, an Urban Infrastructure Development Fund will be established through the use of priority sector lending shortfall," she said.

Ms. Sitharaman also announced that cities will be incentivised to improve their credit worthiness for municipal bonds. "This will be done through property tax governance reforms and ring-fencing user charges on urban infrastructure."

All cities and towns will be enabled for 100% mechanical desludging of septic tanks and sewers to transition from manhole to machine-hole mode, she said, adding that increased focus will be provided for scientific management of dry and wet waste. Industry bodies welcomed the increase in allocation for PMAY. "Incremental PMAY allocation upto ₹79,000 crore will give impetus to affordable housing and benefit a wide segment of homebuyers," said Dr. Niranjan Hiranandani, managing director, Hiranandani group and national vice chairman, National Real Estate Development Council (NAREDCO).

Adani Group calls off ₹20,000-cr. FPO

Gautam Adani, chairman, Adani Enterprises Ltd, said, "The Board takes this opportunity to thank all the investors for your support and commitment to our FPO."

"Today the market has been unprecedented, and our stock price has fluctuated over the course of the day. Given these extraordinary circumstances, the company's Board has decided not to go ahead with the FPO. We are working to refund the proceeds received by us in escrow and to also release the amounts blocked in your bank accounts for subscription to this issue," Mr. Adani added. The Board's announcement came hours after the market regulator apparently launched a full-scale investigation into the allegations levelled in the U.S.-based short-seller Hindenburg Research's report.

According to *Reuters*, the SEBI is investigating any suspected violations in the FPO and is reportedly looking into allegations that Adani entities failed to declare related party transactions as required and used the sprawling network of offshore entities based in tax havens.

During the day, 10 listed firms of the Adani Group witnessed massive rout as stocks plunged to 28% from 3%.

Major crisis

After Wednesday's rout in its shares, it appears that the beleaguered conglomerate is heading for a major crisis of confidence as the global brokerage firm Credit Suisse has now assigned a zero lending value for the bonds sold by three of its firms – Adani Ports and SEZ, Adani Green Energy and Adani Electricity Mumbai.

In just five trading sessions since the Hindenburg Research published its investigation report, the Adani Group's shares in 10 listed firms have seen massive losses.

The combined market value of the group shares has eroded by more than 35% in just five trading sessions, wiping out around ₹7.4 lakh crore from the combined market capitalisation of the group. "There appears no end to the crisis as of now," a top stock broker from Mumbai told *The Hindu*. Wednesday saw a rout in the cement stocks with ACC down by 6.2% and Ambuja Cement down by as much as 16.7% while the recently acquired NDTV's stock declined by around 5%. The Group had acquired ACC and Ambuja from Switzerland's Holcim Group last year.

No statement

Even as the shares of the group were hammered on the bourses after the damaging report from Hindenburg, so far there has been no statement either from the Centre or SEBI about the allegations regarding corporate governance issues.

Budget will lay strong base to build a developed India: PM

The first Budget of *Amrit Kaal* will fulfil the dreams of poor, middle class and farmers, Modi says; hails ₹10 lakh crore investment in infra; underlines govt. efforts to enhance lives of women

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Wednesday termed the Union Budget as the "first Budget of *Amrit Kaal*" (the 25-year period between India's 75th year of Independence and its centenary) and said that it would lay a strong foundation for building a developed India.

"The first Budget of *Amrit Kaal* will build a strong foundation for building a developed India. It gives priority to the deprived. This Budget will fulfil the dreams of an aspirational society including poor people, middle class people and farmers. I congratulate Nirmala Sitharaman and her team for this historic Budget," the Prime Minister said in a televised address after the presentation of the Union Budget.

Vision for nation: Prime Minister Narendra Modi addressing media on the first day of the Union Budget Session. SHIV KUMAR PUSHPAKAR

Mr. Modi called the middle class a big force to fulfil dreams of a prosperous, developed India and said his government has taken many decisions to empower them.

The Budget for this year rejigs tax slabs and exempts those with an income of ₹7 lakh per annum (up from ₹5 lakh per annum in the past) from paying personal income tax and also brings down the effective rate of tax for the higher tax brackets as well.

PM-VIKAS

He hailed the unprecedented investment of ₹10 lakh crore in infrastructure and said it would give speed and new energy to development. Noting that the PM *Vishvakarma Kaushal Samman* would bring a huge change in the lives of "*Vishvakarmas*," (artisans) Mr. Modi said that for the first time schemes relating to their support has been incorporated into the Budget.

"Toiling traditionally with their hands, *Vishvakarmas* are the creators of this country. For the first time a scheme related to training and support for *Vishvakarmas* has been brought into the Budget. Preparations have been made for their training, technology, credit and market support. PM Vishvakarma Kaushal Samman or PM-VIKAS will bring about a huge change in the lives of crores of *Vishwakarmas*," he said.

Mr. Modi also underlined the government's efforts to enhance the lives of women. "The government has taken several steps to make the lives of women easy. Women's self-help groups will further enhance them. The Special Savings Scheme will empower women in households," he added.

U.K. govt. defends BBC's independence, affirms ties with India

Sriram Lakshman
LONDON

The U.K. government on Wednesday defended the independence of the BBC, and the relationship the U.K. has with India, after supporters of Prime Minister Narendra Modi and the Modi government in India and the U.K. raised strong objections to the BBC documentary on Mr. Modi.

"You'll appreciate the BBC is independent in its output. And we would stress that we continue to regard India as an incredibly important international partner," a spokesperson for U.K. Prime Minister Rishi Sunak told the foreign press on Wednesday at a briefing.

'Will invest heavily'

"We'll be investing heavily in our relationship with India over the coming decades and we're confident it will only go from strength to strength," the spokesperson said.

On Tuesday, U.K. Foreign Secretary James Cleverly said he had met Indian High Commissioner to the U.K. Vikram Doraiswami to discuss the fallout of the documentary and other issues.

"I recently had the opportunity to speak to the Indian High Commissioner on this and a number of other issues. We recognise how this portrayal of the Indian government has played out in India," Mr. Cleverly said in Parliament, in response to a question from Bob Blackman, MP for Harrow East.

"I made it clear that the BBC is independent in its output, that the U.K. regards India as an incredibly important international partner and that we will be investing heavily in that relationship in the coming decades," Mr. Cleverly said. Mr. Doraiswami and Mr. Cleverly met at a lunch organised by the India Global Forum, an advocacy group, on January 25. It is, however, not known if the discussions on the documentary took place at this event.

Cong. calls Budget 'callous', says it betrays hopes of the vast majority

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The Union Budget for 2023-24 is "callous" and has betrayed the hopes of a vast majority of Indians, former Union Finance Minister P. Chidambaram said on Wednesday while putting forward the Congress's response to the last full Budget of the Narendra Modi government before the Lok Sabha election in 2024.

Congress chief Mallikarjun Kharge took to Twitter and claimed that the Budget was "big on announcements and short on delivery", and accused the BJP government of making the common man's life difficult. Tweaking the Union government's theme of *Amrit Kaal,* former party chief Rahul Gandhi called it a *mitr kaal* [friend's era] Budget that did not have the road map to build India's future.

Questions raised: Congress MP P. Chidambaram with party national spokesperson Gourav Vallabh (right) and Pawan Khera at the party headquarters in New Delhi on Wednesday. ANI

Addressing a press conference at the All India Congress Committee (AICC) headquarters, Mr. Chidambaram said the Budget "shows how far the government is removed from the people and their concerns about life, livelihood and the growing inequality between the rich and the poor".

He asserted that no tax had been reduced in the Budget except for the small number of people who would opt for the new tax regime. By making the new tax regime the default option, he said the government wanted to "rob the ordinary tax payer of the meagre social security that he may get under the old tax regime".

'No one's benefited'

"Who is benefited by this Budget? Certainly, not the poor. Not the youth looking desperately for jobs. Not those who have been laid off. Not the bulk of the taxpayers. Not the homemaker. Not the thinking Indians who are shocked by the growing inequality, the rise of the number of billionaires and the wealth being accumulated in the hands of the 1% of the population," he said.

The senior Congress leader pointed out that neither the indirect taxes had been reduced nor had there been any cut in the Goods and Services Tax (GST). Though the Economic Survey listed all the headwinds that the world is going to face, the Budget did not offer any solution. "The Budget speech did not even acknowledge the headwinds and the government is living in its own imaginary world," he said.

Congress general secretary Jairam Ramesh said the actual expenditure was substantially lower than budgeted. "This is Modi's OPUD strategy of headline management – Over Promise, Under Deliver".

Tax rejig signals BJP's nod to core middle class support base ahead of 2024 polls

Nistula Hebbar
NEW DELHI

The Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana of housing received a 66% hike in outlay of ₹79,000 crore

At a meeting of the Union Council of Ministers held last Sunday, Prime Minister Narendra Modi urged his Ministerial colleagues to improve their communication with the people, especially the middle class, on programmes that directly or indirectly benefit them. It was the biggest hint of what was to come in the Budget presented on Wednesday, with major changes in personal income tax slabs, doubling of rebate, and bringing down of the effective highest rate of tax from over 42% to 39%.

The core constituency

The Budget, the last full one before the Lok Sabha elections of 2024, therefore shows that the core constituency of the BJP, the middle class, especially the neo middle class, has been addressed, after years of pro-poor policies and programmes as the party sought to improve its political footprint.

If the past few Budgets were about programmes such as the Ujjwala Yojana of free gas connections, or Pradhan Mantri Kisan Samman Nidhi (farmers income support programme), this time the highlight was the middle class from whom the party was facing a blowback of being taken for granted.

The exemption from income tax to those with income under ₹7 lakh per annum (up from ₹5 lakh per annum) and the changes in the tax slabs under the new income tax regime is good news for those categories.

The relief in the BJP, which is all set to face nine Assembly polls this year and the Lok Sabha election in the next, was palpable, to the point where party MP Vinod Sonkar urged Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman to repeat the announcements of the exemptions. "Madam, once more," he said from the back benches. Ms. Sitharaman cracked a smile, but did not oblige.

This is not to say that some of the other, effective popular programmes were neglected. The Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana of housing for the poor received a 66% hike in outlay of ₹79,000 crore. Surveys have shown that the scheme remains popular among the poor as it provides the only fixed asset for them – a dwelling place.

For women voters

Women have been considered an emerging and loyal constituency for Mr. Modi and the BJP with the former often attributing several poll victories to the support of women voters. Ms. Sitharaman, keeping that in mind, announced the 'Mahila Samman Saving Certificate' for women. "One-time new small saving under 'Mahila Samman Saving Patra'. The deposit facility for women and girls will be for a period of two years, with rate of interest at 7.5%," she said.

Aiming Assembly polls

State elections also came in for a nod, with a ₹5,300-crore outlay for the Upper Bhadra Irrigation Project, which will benefit the drought-prone areas of Central Karnataka. It will provide micro-irrigation to Chitradurga, Tumakuru and Davangere districts in the poll-bound State's Chikkamagaluru area.

An outlay of ₹15,000 crore (over the next three years) has also been announced to provide saturation level basic facilities for the Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PVTG) under a new PVTG mission. This is notable as the States going to the polls such as Meghalaya, Tripura, Chhattisgarh and Madhya Pradesh have significant tribal populations.

As the country gets set to face the next general election, protecting the core of the BJP's support base is very evident in this year's Budget.

Kappan likely to walk free today after 27 months in jail

The Hindu Bureau
LUCKNOW

Kerala journalist Siddique Kappan who was arrested under the Unlawful Activities Prevention Act (UAPA), among other cases, is likely to be released on Thursday after a special court in Lucknow signed his release order more than five weeks after he got bail in the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA) case lodged by the Enforcement Directorate (ED).

"All the formalities were completed today. He is likely to come out of prison tomorrow," Mohamed Dhanish K.S., Mr. Kappan's lawyer, told *The Hindu*.

Mr. Kappan will walk free after more than 27 months since his arrest in October 2020 while he was on his way to Hathras. Mr. Kappan was booked under various Sections of the Indian Penal Code (IPC), the UAPA and the Information Technology Act.

Marginal hike in funds for Home Ministry, allocation for Census slashed by half

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

In an indication that the Census exercise – meant to be completed in 2021, but delayed because of COVID-19 – may not be conducted in 2023-24, the Union Budget allocation under the Census Survey and Statistics head has been slashed to ₹1,565 crore from the ₹3,676 crore allocated in 2022-23. The previous Census was held in 2011.

File photo of officials collecting data as part of Census in 2011.

Overall, the Union Home Ministry has been allocated ₹1.96 lakh crore in the Budget, a 5% hike from the almost ₹1.86 lakh crore allotted to it in the current fiscal.

In her Budget speech, Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman said that the States must spend the entire 50-year loan given to them on capital expenditure within the 2023-24 financial year. The allocation for the National Intelligence Grid (NATGRID) has been more than doubled, growing a whopping 128% from ₹87.77 crore in 2022-23 to ₹200.53 crore in the coming year.

The Intelligence Bureau has seen an increase of 7% with an allocation of ₹3,418 crore in 2023-24.

The Official Languages Division that promotes the use of Hindi language in official government work has been allocated a budget of ₹93.26 crore. The Special Protection Group, which provides security cover to the Prime Minister, has seen a 12% increase in allocation from ₹385 crore to ₹433 crore. Border infrastructure and management has seen its budget grow 29%, from ₹2,744 crore in 2022-23 to ₹3,545 crore in 2023-24.

A total of ₹2,092 crore has been reserved for "research," which is almost 50% higher than the ₹1,400 crore for 2021-22.

INBRIEF

Two Polish tourists killed as avalanche hits Gulmarg resort

Two Polish tourists were killed when a major avalanche hit the ski slopes in north Kashmir's tourist hotspot Gulmarg on Wednesday. The avalanche was massive and engulfed everything in the Hapath Khud area of the Afarwat peaks in Gulmarg, situated at an altitude of 4,390 metres (14,403 feet) in the morning. Three teams, comprising 21 foreign nationals and two local guides, were skiing in the area on the Afarwat ski slopes when the avalanche struck around half past noon and trapped all of them. The police said 19 foreign nationals and two locals were rescued.

'Centre of Excellence' tag for millet institute in Hyderabad

The Indian Institute of Millet Research (IIMR) in Hyderabad will soon get a facelift as Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman announced on Wednesday that it will be supported as a 'Centre of Excellence' for sharing best practices, research and technologies at the international level. In her Budget speech, she said that globally, India is the largest producer and second largest exporter of *Shree Anna* (millets), which has numerous health benefits and has been an integral part of food for centuries. The IIMR, a premier institute under the Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR), is engaged in basic and strategic research on sorghum and other millets. PTI

Bombay HC dismisses plea by accused in Pansare case

The Bombay High Court on Wednesday dismissed a plea by the accused in rationalist Govind Pansare's murder in 2015 and said they have no say in the matter where the High Court is monitoring the investigation and trial in the case. A Division Bench of Justices A.S. Gadkari and P.D. Naik was hearing a plea filed by the accused challenging the monitoring of the probe and trial by the High Court in the case. According to the accused, this was delaying the trial against them. The Bench dismissed their plea and said, "There is a difference between the rights of an accused when it comes to further investigation. As far as it is concerned, you have no say."

Proposal to rename Etawah district as Mulayam Nagar

A proposal was made at the District Panchayat Board meeting in Etawah to change the name of Etawah district to Mulayam Nagar in memory of the Samajwadi Party (SP) founder and former Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister, Mulayam Singh. He was born in the district. In the meeting, some members put forth the idea, which is likely to be passed in the next board meeting and sent to the State government for approval. "Etawah is known by late Netaji (Mulayam Singh). Even today people are remembering him. All our members have proposed that Etawah be renamed Mulayam Nagar after Netaji," district panchayat chief Abhishek Yadav said.

Finance Minister proposes amendments to banking laws

Changes proposed in Budget to the Banking Regulation Act, the Banking Companies Act and the Reserve Bank of India Act to improve bank governance and enhance investors' protection

The Hindu Bureau
MUMBAI

Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman on Wednesday proposed certain amendments to the Banking Regulation Act, the Banking Companies Act and the Reserve Bank of India Act to improve bank governance and enhance investors' protection.

Further, to reduce the cost of compliance, financial sector regulators will carry out a comprehensive review of existing regulations and consider suggestions from public and regulated entities, Prem Rajani, managing partner, Rajani Associates, said. "It will be interesting to see the amendments that will be made," he said.

Push for inclusivity: Financial sector regulators will carry a review of existing regulations and take suggestions from all. REUTERS

He said the Budget re-emphasised the government's commitment to deploying technology to augment the financial sector. "The focus on the deployment of DigiLocker and the development of a National Financial Information Registry will not only serve as the central repository of financial and ancillary information to promote financial inclusion but also considerably promote the ease of doing business," he said.

To build capacity of functionaries and professionals in the securities market, SEBI will be empowered to develop, regulate, maintain and enforce norms and standards for education in the National Institute of Securities Markets and to recognise award of degrees, diplomas and certificates, Ms. Sitharaman said in her Budget speech.

The Hindu Group bags 4 WAN-IFRA Digital Media Awards

The Hindu Bureau
CHENNAI

The Hindu Group has bagged four awards at the WAN-IFRA Digital Media South Asia Awards, 2022 for its products and services.

TH Newsletters won silver in Best Digital Subscription initiative and *The Hindu* e-paper bagged gold in Best ePaper concept. In the Best Use of Short Form Video category, Trending and Current Affairs, *The Hindu* won the gold award.

'Coimbatore Unlimited-Collaborate, Co-create and Celebrate,' an event that hosted a curated series of panel discussions on Coimbatore won the silver award in the Best Native Advertising/Sponsored Content Campaign category. A press release said the World Association of News Publishers (WAN-IFRA) recognises outstanding digital media projects delivered by South Asian news publishers. This was the sixth edition of digital media awards for South Asia. *The Quint*, *The Hindu*, *Prothom Alo* and *The Indian Express* emerged as the award winners.

India, U.S. step up strategic ties with tech plan

Sriram Lakshman

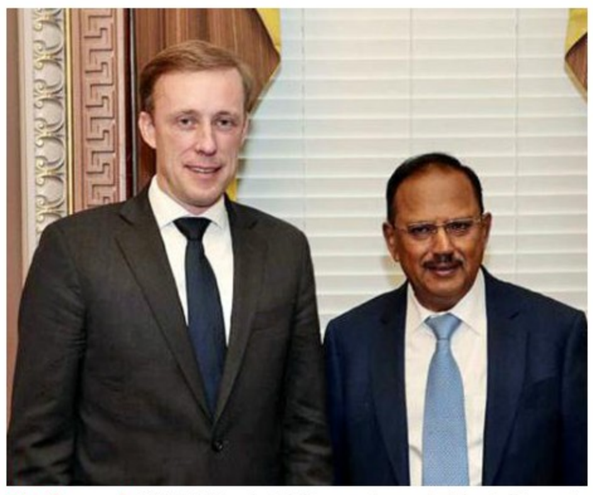
India and the U.S., on Tuesday, launched a programme to enhance their strategic partnership with delegations led by National Security Adviser (NSA) Ajit Doval and his American counterpart, Jake Sullivan, meeting in Washington for the inaugural dialogue of the Initiative on Critical and Emerging Technologies (iCET).

The two sides announced a set of programmes whose aim is to increase the depth and scope of bilateral cooperation in cutting edge technology, including in the defence sector.

The iCET seeks to build supply chains which increase co-production and co-development between the countries and increase linkages between the countries' start-up ecosystems, both governments said in their statements describing the dialogue.

A White House 'fact sheet' released after the meeting highlighted six areas of planned cooperation: strengthening innovation ecosystems, defence innovation and technology cooperation, resilient semiconductor supply chains, space, STEM talent and next generation telecommunications.

The programmes include a Research Agency Partnership between the U.S. National Science Foundation and Indian science agencies; a mechanism to cooperate on quantum computing that will also involve academia and industry; developing a new defence industrial cooperation roadmap; supporting the development of semiconductors in India, including by setting up a taskforce to identify opportunities; and increasing space cooperation, including human spaceflight.



Way forward: NSA Ajit Doval with his counterpart, Jake Sullivan, at a meeting in Washington on Wednesday. ANI

5G cooperation

Also announced was a private-public dialogue to further 5G/6G cooperation and the adoption of Open RAN (technology to connect phones to each other and to the Internet) in India.

The U.S. also committed to a speedy review of an application from General Electric to produce jet engines in India for India-manufactured Light Combat Aircraft.

The initiative is a particularly significant milestone in the bilateral relationship, having been announced at the highest level – by Prime Minister Narendra Modi and U.S. President Joe Biden at the Quad summit in Tokyo in May 2022.

This level of backing, plus the fact that it is being led by the NSAs on both sides – with their ability to coordinate across Ministries and departments – not only "distinguished" this initiative but was also critical to its success, a senior U.S. official told reporters on a Tuesday briefing call.

The involvement of the business and academic communities in India and the U.S., and the initiative's plan to renew and capitalise on existing mechanisms rather than replace them, are factors in iCET's favour, one U.S. official said.

Easing export controls

Also under discussion in Washington were an easing of export controls and restrictions.

"I think on both sides we were quite candid about the challenges that we pose to each other from a regulatory standpoint. In many cases that gets in the way of the vision of deeper and broader technology cooperation," a senior administration official told reporters on a briefing call on Tuesday.

To address these restrictions, the Biden administration would work closely with the U.S. Congress, where there is bipartisan support for the bilateral partnership, the official said.

"The U.S. side also assured support to ease export barriers to India in a few critical areas, including through efforts towards legislative changes," the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) said in its statement.

The White House statement said the Biden administration would work with the U.S. Congress to lower barriers to U.S. exports to India of High Performance Computing and source code.

The initiative comes at a time when the U.S. is seeking to out-compete China in critical technologies and tighten the screws on China's semiconductor industry. Biden administration officials were quick to emphasise, however, that iCET is not just about China.

"These efforts are about more than just China, because this isn't just about defence. This is a multi-layered approach in a lot of different places," one senior Biden said. For the U.S., this is about wanting to participate in India's rise and the "next logical milestone" in the bilateral relationship, officials said.

Human rights

The White House's statement made references to human rights, while the MEA's statement did not. The U.S. has been concerned about the misuse of technology, such as in China, where it has been deployed for intrusive surveillance.

"The United States and India affirm that the ways in which technology is designed, developed, governed, and used should be shaped by our shared democratic values and respect for universal human rights," the White House said.

It added that the two countries are committed to technology that will "reinforce our democratic values and democratic institutions".

Mr. Doval was joined at Tuesday's meeting by India's Ambassador to the U.S., Taranjit Singh Sandhu, the Principal Scientific Adviser, the Secretary, Department of Telecommunications, Chairman of ISRO, Scientific Adviser to the Defence Minister, Director-General, DRDO, and other senior officials, the MEA said.

The two sides planned to hold the next iCET meeting in New Delhi later this year.

Vibration disturbance led to failure of SSLV-D1

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

The Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) on Wednesday released the failure analysis report of the Small Satellite Launch Vehicle (SSLV-D1), which failed during its maiden launch last August.

The cause of the anomaly was a vibration disturbance for a short duration on the equipment bay (EB) deck during the second stage separation.

"Detailed analysis of the flight events and observations ranging from countdown, lift-off, propulsion performance, stage separations and satellite injection revealed that there was a vibration disturbance for a short duration on the EB deck during the second stage separation, that affected the Inertial Navigation System, resulting in declaring the sensors faulty by the logic in Fault Detection & Isolation software," says the summary of the failure analysis.

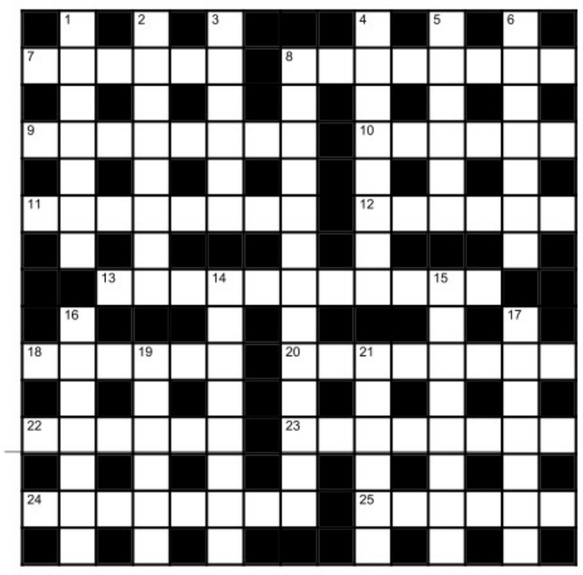
The first developmental flight of the SSLV lifted off from the Satish Dhawan Space Centre on August 7, 2022 to inject EOS-02 satellite of the ISRO into a circular orbit of 356.2 km. Azaadisat, a student satellite, was part of the mission. The report said though the salvage mode was initiated, it could not inject the satellites into a safe orbit.

TH CROSSWORD + 13778

(set by WrdPlougher)

To solve this puzzle online, get across to our crossword site. @ *https://qrgo.page.link/jjpTn*

SCAN TO PLAY



Across

7 Share market's third warning - heads of company unanimously pulling out (6)
8 Concocted toxins and discharged chemicals causing rust (8)
9 Passing ships brewing gin (8)
10 Sangria possessing half the charm? (3-3)
11 Enacted final pieces of humane legislation after running decisively for Justice of Supreme Court (2-6)
12 Home development stream (6)
13 Greeted sage working to bring people together (11)
18 Period of remand originally part of sentence (6)
20 No prize money to cover IOU, losing heart (8)
22 Going west on vacation, organise rare talks from many speakers (6)
23 Venerate two nurses face-to-face with title of honour in India (8)
24 Odd bits from Iftar used up, eating what finally remains (8)
25 Like an angle not all that sharp? (6)

Down

1 Behind Spooner's ordinary nurse (4,3)
2 Smart Alec immersed in Langkawi sea creatures (8)
3 Machine learning, AI, ultimately controlled by information without origin, infinite web (6)
4 Annoying nerdy idiot primarily searching the web without specs (8)
5 Buffet, Iftar fest's foremost duty (6)
6 Silvery element, great illuminator - lastly - one mainly found forming alloy component (7)
8 Street musicians, heart-breakers? (5-8)
14 Prized canine setter, reportedly very tough, gutless (3,5)
15 In the end, Revenant Leo desperately had to tuck in belly of horse or bear? (8)
16 "Yech! Nut in a pickle relish" (7)
17 Delivered somewhat flowerless plant stock? (7)
19 Potter's profession, a sparkling prospect (6)
21 Present fancy set wrapped in bow (6)

SUDOKU

1			2					
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7				3	9			
		8				9		5
	3			1			8	
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No.SS5697 Distribution: www.knightfeatures.com

DIFFICULTY RATING: ★★☆☆☆

Solution to previous puzzle

Solution to yesterday's Sudoku

2	8	6	1	5	9	7	3	4
3	5	4	2	7	8	9	6	1
7	1	9	6	3	4	2	8	5
4	3	5	9	8	2	1	7	6
8	9	2	7	1	6	4	5	3
1	6	7	3	4	5	8	2	9
5	7	3	4	2	1	6	9	8
9	2	1	8	6	3	5	4	7
6	4	8	5	9	7	3	1	2

FAITH

Honouring the Acharyas

Kooratazhvan, in his Sundarabahu Stava, which is in praise of Lord Sundararaja of Thirumaliruncholai, speaks of the sacredness of river Nupura Ganga. Nupura means anklet. When Lord Narayana took the Trivikrama avatara, Brahma washed His feet, and the water became sanctified by contact with His feet. This water flows in Thirumaliruncholai, and hence the name Nupura Ganga, explained P.B. Rajahamsam, in a discourse. It is known as Silambaru in Tamil (silambu - anklet). The wishes of those who bathe in Nupura Ganga are fulfilled, says Kooratazhvan. It is said that if one stays in Thirumaliruncholai for 24 days and bathes in the Nupura Ganga, and eats nothing but the temple prasada, then one will be blessed with children.

Periyazhvar, his daughter Andal and Thirumangai Azhvar have sung pasurams describing Silambaru. Andal says that as Silambaru flows with force, it brings with it sandal trees, and reaches the place where the Lord of Thirumaliruncholai resides. Thirumaalayandan, one of the Acharyas of Ramanujacharya, reached the lotus feet of the Lord in the Tamil month of Aippasi, on sukla paksha dvadasi. In remembrance of this, the Lord of Thirumaliruncholai goes to the place where the Silambaru flows in, and has an abhisheka there. This thotti thirumanjanam is in honour of Thirumaalaiyandaan. Similarly, in Kancheepuram, on sukla paksha chaturdasi, in the month of Karthika, the day on which Thirukachchi Nambi attained the feet of the Lord, Lord Varadaraja goes to the mandapa where He had conversations with Thirukachchi Nambi, and has an abhisheka there.

ANKARA

Sweden can't join NATO if burning of the Koran is allowed: Erdogan

AFP

President Recep Tayyip Erdogan said on Wednesday that Turkey won't allow Sweden to join the NATO military alliance as long as it permits protests desecrating Islam's holy book to take place. Turkey has been infuriated by demonstrations in Stockholm by activists who have burned the Koran outside the Turkish Embassy. AP

DUBAI

Saudi executions up sharply under King Salman, MBS: rights group

REUTERS

Executions in Saudi Arabia have nearly doubled under King Salman and his son Mohammed bin Salman, rights groups said on Tuesday. Capital punishment soared from an average of 70.8 executions a year from 2010 to 2014, to 129.5 a year since 2015, said a report by the European Saudi Organisation for Human Rights. AFP

LONDON

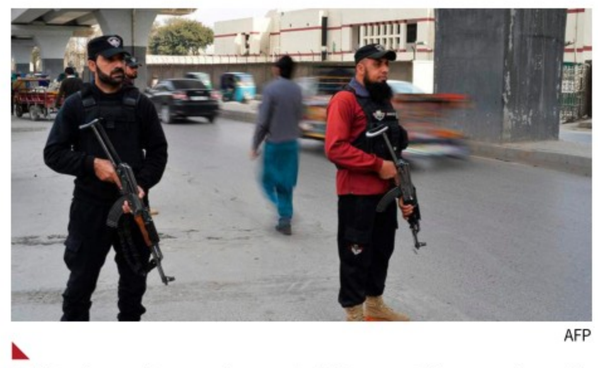
U.K. teachers and civil servants join strike on 'Walkout Wednesday'

AFP

Up to half a million British teachers, civil servants, and others walked out over pay on Wednesday, with unions threatening more disruption. The mass walkouts shut schools, halted rail services, and forced the military to be put on standby to help with border checks on a day dubbed "Walkout Wednesday" by unions. REUTERS

PESHAWAR

17 suspects held in mosque blast; Pak. Army chief vows strict action



AFP

Pakistan's security agencies arrested 17 suspects in connection with the suicide blast in a high-security zone mosque in Peshawar that killed 101 people, including 97 policemen, as Army chief Gen. Asim Munir vowed zero tolerance for terror groups and directed his generals to eliminate the threat of militancy. PTI

Russia gains in Donetsk campaign; Ukraine seeks fighter jets from allies

Zelensky's government is lobbying neighbours and Western nations for aircraft; France says 'there is no taboo' on supplying planes, while the U.S. and the U.K. remain reluctant; Washington to send a $2.2 billion worth of additional military package

Reuters
KYIV

Russian forces are making incremental gains in their push to take territory in Ukraine's eastern province of Donetsk, focusing on the town of Bakhmut north of the regional capital.

Having finally persuaded NATO countries to supply modern battle tanks, President Volodymyr Zelensky's government is now lobbying hard for some of Ukraine's neighbours and Western allies to supply fighter jets.

In Paris after meeting Ukrainian Defence Minister Oleksii Reznikov, French Defence Minister Sebastien Lecornu said "there was no taboo" about supplying Kyiv with fighter planes.

Goal is one: A man passes by an artwork designed by a street artist, depicting a Ukrainian soldier firing an anti-tank missile. AP

The U.S. and Britain have thus far rejected the idea but repeated their willingness to continue military support to Ukraine, which Russian forces invaded in February 2022 in what Moscow called a "special military operation" to protect Russian security and its speakers.

More recently, Russia has characterised the conflict as confronting what it says is an aggressive and expansionist U.S.-led NATO military alliance.

The West has so far refused to send weapons that could be used to attack deep inside Russia for fear of starting a wider conflict although Moscow has denounced recent Western pledges of weapons as provocations.

The U.S., which has provided Ukraine about $27.2 billion in military aid since Russia's invasion, is preparing a $2.2 billion package of additional assistance. That is expected to offer Kyiv longer-range rockets for the first time and other munitions and weapons, two U.S. officials told *Reuters* on Tuesday.

Bakhmut area targeted

Ukrainian defenders in Bakhmut came under renewed fire as did Klishchiivka and Kurdyumivka, villages on the southern approaches to the town, the General Staff of the Ukrainian Armed Forces said in a statement on Tuesday.

Bakhmut has suffered a relentless bombardment for months, as Russian forces resorted to the same destructive tactics they used to capture two cities further north - Sievierodonetsk and Lysychansk - in June and July.

Russian forces on Tuesday made no headway in attempts to advance on Avdiivka, the second focal point of Russian attacks in Donetsk region, Kyiv's military General Staff said. Russian forces also tried to advance near Lyman, a town further north in Donetsk region that was recaptured by Ukrainian forces in October, the military said.

FBI searches President Biden's Delaware home in classified documents probe

Associated Press
WASHINGTON

The FBI was conducting a planned search on Wednesday of President Joe Biden's Rehoboth Beach, Delaware home as part of its investigation into the potential mishandling of classified documents, the President's personal lawyer said. The search follows a 13-hour, top-to-bottom review of his Wilmington, Delaware home on January 20, when agents located additional documents with classified markings and also took possession of some of his handwritten notes.

The President has been voluntarily allowing the Justice Department into his residences as investigators seek to determine how classified documents from Mr. Biden's time as Vice-President and a Senator wound up in his home and office. The probe followed the November 2 discovery of documents with classified markings by Mr. Biden's lawyers as they closed up an office at the Penn Biden Center, a think tank affiliated with the Ivy League school.

Joe Biden

Documents were also found at his Wilmington home by his lawyers, who initiated a search after the Penn Biden Center documents were discovered. The FBI also searched the Penn Biden Center in November following the initial discovery of documents there, a person familiar with the matter told *The Associated Press*.

"Under DOJ's standard procedures, in the interests of operational security and integrity, it sought to do this work without advance public notice, and we agreed to cooperate," said the statement from Mr. Biden's lawyer, Bob Bauer. "The search today is a further step in a thorough and timely DOJ process we will continue to fully support and facilitate. We will have further information at the conclusion of today's search."

An FBI spokeswoman referred comment to the Justice Department. A spokesman there did not immediately return a message seeking comment. It was not clear whether any additional classified documents were found.

Pak. inflation rises to 48-year high as IMF visits for talks

Agence France-Presse
KARACHI

Inflation has risen to a 48-year high in crisis-hit Pakistan, where the International Monetary Fund (IMF) is visiting for urgent talks, according to data released on Wednesday by the country's statistics bureau.

Year-on-year inflation in January 2023 was recorded at 27.55%, the highest since May 1975. Pakistan's economy is in dire straits, stricken by a balance of payments crisis while it attempts to service high amounts of external debt. The world's fifth-biggest population has less than $3.7 billion in the state bank - enough to cover just three weeks of imports.

Shehbaz Sharif

On Tuesday, an IMF delegation arrived in Islamabad to revive negotiations over a stalled bailout package with the government, which has so far held out from meeting the global lender's tough conditions.

But in recent days, with the prospect of national bankruptcy looming and no friendly countries willing to offer less painful bailouts, Islamabad has started to bow to pressure.

U.S. 'destroyed' arms control pact: Moscow

Agence France-Presse
MOSCOW

The Kremlin accused Washington on Wednesday of "destroying" weapons control agreements, after the U.S. said Russia was not complying with their last remaining arms pact, the New START treaty.

Tensions between the countries were already at breaking point before Russia sent troops to Ukraine, but have plummeted further since. The State Department faulted Russia for suspending inspections and cancelling talks but did not accuse Moscow of expanding nuclear warheads beyond agreed limits. "We believe that the continuation of this treaty is very important," Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov said. "We see that the U.S. has actually destroyed the legal framework in the field of arms control and security," he added.

Russia's Ambassador to the U.S. said Moscow has been "irreproachably observing" the accord.

Myanmar streets empty in protest on coup anniversary

Agence France-Presse
YANGON

Streets emptied and shops closed in protest across Myanmar on Wednesday, the second anniversary of the coup that toppled Aung San Suu Kyi's government, with the junta hinting it may extend a state of emergency and delay new elections. Myanmar has been in turmoil since the military's power grab and bloody crackdown on dissent, which has sparked fighting across the country and tanked the economy.

Western powers launched a fresh broadside of sanctions against the generals on the anniversary but previous rounds have shown little sign of throwing the junta off course.

Streets in the commercial hub Yangon largely emptied from late morning, AFP correspondents said, after activists called for people across the Southeast Asian country to close businesses and stay indoors from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. local time.

Roads leading to the famous Shwedagon pagoda - a Buddhist shrine that dominates Yangon's skyline and is usually thronged by worshippers - were largely deserted.

Most buses on roads elsewhere in the city were empty and there was a heavy security presence.

It was similarly quiet in the second city of Mandalay, a resident told *AFP*.

Sport

Shreyas' unbeaten ton highlights Karnataka's run fest

RANJI TROPHY

N. Sudarshan
BENGALURU

Shreyas Gopal scored his fifth First Class century (103 batting, 153b, 13x4, 1x6) as Karnataka took a mammoth 358-run lead to further tighten its grip on the Ranji Trophy quarterfinal against Uttarakhand at the M. Chinnaswamy Stadium on Wednesday. To the overnight 123 without loss, the home side added 351 runs on the second day. All four of Karnataka's top-order batters threatened to reach the three-figure mark, but it was only Shreyas who showed the patience and discipline to make good on the promise.

Coming in at 307 for four, Shreyas combined with Manish Pandey for a 108-run partnership. Even as Manish played an uncharacteristically slow knock (39, 73b, 4x4), Shreyas scored brisk runs, with his six over long-on off left-arm spinner Swapnil Singh and the slapped four down the ground off pacer Nikhil Kohli standing out.

Well-crafted: Shreyas showed the patience and discipline to notch up his fifth First Class hundred. SUDHAKARA JAIN

After tea, Shreyas feasted on some ordinary bowling from Uttarakhand, especially its spinners. He moved to 96 with a steer to the third-man fence and then, on 99, drove left-arm tweaker Mayank Mishra off the last ball of the day to bring up a much-deserved hundred. "There were nerves because I had gotten out on 95 (vs. Rajasthan)," Shreyas said. "I also started panicking a bit in the 40s because I had gotten out on 48 against Kerala. I want to be scoring one or two hundreds every season and I am glad I could do it after many years."

Earlier, R. Samarth (82, 108b, 11x4) and Mayank Agarwal (83, 109b, 12x4, 1x6) scored some quick runs, but momentary lapses in concentration cost them, both out caught in the slip cordon.

Devdutt Padikkal (69, 121b, 8x4, 1x6) and Nikin Jose (62, 100b, 12x4) put on 118 runs for the third wicket. Jose shaded his senior colleague, smacking a dozen boundaries, of which the most eye-catching ones were those hit inside-out.

The visitors didn't help themselves with a shoddy performance on the field. Aditya Tare missed a stumping off Padikkal when he was on 39; Manish was let off twice and Shreyas was dropped by Akhil Singh Rawat in the slips when on 68.

The scores: Uttarakhand — 1st innings: 116.
Karnataka — 1st innings: R. Samarth c Akhil b Abhay Negi 82, Mayank Agarwal c Jiwanjot b Abhay Negi 83, Devdutt Padikkal c Jiwanjot b Mayank 69, Nikin Jose c Abhay Negi b Mayank 62, Manish Pandey c Tare b Mayank 39, Shreyas Gopal (batting) 103, B.R. Sharath (batting) 23; Extras (lb-3, w-3, nb-7): 13; Total (for five wkts. in 116 overs): 474.

Fall of wickets: 1-159, 2-182, 3-300, 4-307, 5-415.

Uttarakhand bowling: Dhapola 23-4-85-0, Abhay Negi 22-5-82-2, Kohli 13-0-82-0, Swapnil 17-0-78-0, Mayank Mishra 31-5-98-3, Dikshanshu Negi 6-0-30-0, Sudha 4-0-16-0.

RANJI TROPHY SCORES (QUARTERFINALS, DAY TWO)

At Kolkata: Jharkhand 173 vs. Bengal 238/5 in 81 overs (Abhimanyu Easwaran 77, Sudip Kumar Gharami 68).
At Rajkot: Saurashtra 303 vs. Punjab 327/5 in 91 overs (Prabhsimran Singh 126, Naman Dhir 131).
At Bengaluru: Uttarakhand 116 vs. Karnataka 474/5 in 116 overs (R. Samarth 82, Mayank Agarwal 83, Devdutt Padikkal 69, Nikin Jose 62, Shreyas Gopal 103 batting).
At Indore: Andhra 379 in 127.1 overs (Ricky Bhui 149, Karan Shinde 110, Anubhav Agarwal 4/72) vs. Madhya Pradesh 144/4 in 41 overs (Shubham Sharma 51).

SNAPSHOTS

Triumphant: The Karnataka Forest Department team that emerged the KSHA 'A' Division champion on Tuesday. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

Karnataka women make the last eight

Veda Krishnamurthy top-scored with an unbeaten 44 as Karnataka beat Madhya Pradesh by seven wickets to enter the quarterfinal of the BCCI Senior One Day Trophy in Ranchi. In the last-eight clash on Friday, Karnataka will take on Delhi.
The scores: Madhya Pradesh 166/9 in 50 overs (Manjiri Gawade 40, V. Chandu 3/28) lost to Karnataka 168/3 in 36.3 overs (Vrinda Dinesh 29, Shishira A. Gowda 41, Divya Gnanananda 27, Veda Krishnamurthy 44 n.o.).

Veteran India forward Parimal Dey passes away

Parimal Dey (81), one of the finest forwards to have donned the East Bengal jersey, breathed his last in Kolkata on Wednesday.

Dey, who won five caps for India, was instrumental in fetching the bronze for the country in the 1966 Merdeka Cup playoff against South Korea.

Dey also participated in the Bangkok Asian Games (1966).

Gill's breathtaking innings knocks the wind out of New Zealand's sails

The opener slams an unbeaten 126 off just 63 deliveries, records the highest T20I score by an Indian; skipper Hardik delivers with the ball as the hosts register their biggest win by runs in the shortest format; the Kiwis, pursuing a target of 235, get skittled out for 66

NZ IN INDIA

Ashwin Achal
AHMEDABAD

Class act: Gill proved unstoppable in the third T20I. VIJAY SONEJI

Shubman Gill (126 n.o., 63b, 12x4, 7x6) lit the stage with a sparkling knock to power India to a 168-run win over New Zealand in the third T20I here on Wednesday. India, which recorded its largest T20I win (in runs), wrapped up the three-match leg 2-1.

Gill more than made up for failures in the previous two outings. The opener was in full flow, going to on record the highest T20I individual score by an Indian. The previous mark was set by Virat Kohli, who made an unbeaten 122 against Afghanistan at Dubai last year.

Gill started cautiously, moving to 61 off 41 balls. He got going in the 16th over, whipping debutant left-arm seamer Ben Lister for two sixes over deep mid-wicket. In the next over, the opener hammered Blair Tickner for two more sixes.

A superb drive past mid-off brought Gill his first T20I century, and he celebrated with a bow to the crowd. Gill, who racked up 208 and 112 against the same opponent in the preceding ODI matches, once again took the match away from the Kiwis.

Gill's pyrotechnics took India to a mammoth 234 for four – the highest ever T20I team total at the Narendra Modi Stadium.

One-drop Rahul Tripathi shifted the early momentum India's way with an entertaining 22-ball 44. Tripathi showed great self-belief when he paddle-scooped a 148 kmph rocket from Lockie Ferguson for six over the deep fine-leg fielder. The 31-year-old Maharashtra batter was good against spin as well, striking left-arm tweaker Mitchell Santner was a clean straight maximum.

Captain Hardik Pandya (30, 17b, 4x4, 1x6) sat back and enjoyed Gill's exploits in a 103-run fourth-wicket stand.

The New Zealand chase fell apart by the fifth over. The visitor crumbled to 21 for five in 4.3 overs, with fast bowlers Hardik Pandya, Arshdeep Singh and Umran Malik getting among the wickets. Suryakumar Yadav pulled off two blinders at slip, leaping high like a football goalkeeper.

Hardik took four for 16, while Umran, Arshdeep and Shivam Mavi took two each as India stayed unbeaten in the last 13 bilateral T20Is in the country.

SCOREBOARD

INDIA

Ishan Kishan lbw b Bracewell 1 *(3b)*, Shubman Gill (not out) 126 *(63b, 12x4, 7x6)*, Rahul Tripathi c Ferguson b Sodhi 44 *(22b, 4x4, 3x6)*, Suryakumar Yadav c Bracewell b Tickner 24 *(13b, 1x4, 2x6)*, Hardik Pandya c Bracewell b Mitchell 30 *(17b, 4x4, 1x6)*, Deepak Hooda (not out) 2 *(2b)*; Extras (b-2, lb-1, w-4): 7; Total (for four wkts. in 20 overs): 234.

FALL OF WICKETS

1-7 (Kishan, 1.2 overs), 2-87 (Tripathi, 8.2), 3-125 (Suryakumar, 12.3), 4-228 (Hardik, 19.1).

NEW ZEALAND BOWLING

Lister 4-0-42-0, Bracewell 1-0-8-1, Ferguson 4-0-54-0, Tickner 3-0-50-1, Sodhi 3-0-34-1, Santner 4-0-37-0, Mitchell 1-0-6-1.

NEW ZEALAND

Finn Allen c Suryakumar b Hardik 3 *(4b)*, Devon Conway c Hardik b Arshdeep 1 *(2b)*, Mark Chapman c Kishan b Arshdeep 0 *(2b)*, Glenn Phillips c Suryakumar b Hardik 2 *(7b)*, Daryl Mitchell c Mavi b Umran 35 *(25b, 1x4, 3x6)*, Michael Bracewell b Umran 8 *(8b, 1x6)*, Mitchell Santner c Suryakumar b Mavi 13 *(13b, 1x4)*, Ish Sodhi c Tripathi b Mavi 0 *(2b)*, Lockie Ferguson c Umran b Hardik 0 *(4b)*, Blair Tickner c Kishan b Hardik 1 *(5b)*, Benjamin Lister (not out) 0 *(1b)*; Extras (lb-1, w-2): 3; Total (in 12.1 overs): 66.

FALL OF WICKETS

1-4 (Allen, 0.5), 2-4 (Conway, 1.1), 3-5 (Chapman, 1.6), 4-7 (Phillips, 2.4), 5-21 (Bracewell, 4.3), 6-53 (Santner, 8.3), 7-53 (Sodhi, 8.5), 8-54 (Ferguson, 9.4), 9-66 (Tickner, 11.5).

INDIA BOWLING

Hardik 4-0-16-4, Arshdeep 3-0-16-2, Umran 2.1-0-9-2, Kuldeep 1-0-12-0, Mavi 2-0-12-2.

Toss: India.
Player-of-the-Match: Shubman Gill.
Player-of-the-Series: Hardik Pandya.
India won the third and final T20I by 168 runs to clinch the series 2-1.

ADVERT.

SCAN HERE FOR HIGHLIGHT OF THE DAY

Hardik just told me to bat the way I do, reveals Gill

Pulling together: It was a complete all-round show by India in the decider. VIJAY SONEJI

Ashwin Achal
AHMEDABAD

Shubman Gill, who blasted an unbeaten 126 in the third T20I against New Zealand here on Wednesday, stated that skipper Hardik Pandya played a role in his success.

"Everybody has a different technique to hit sixes. Hardik *bhai* just told me to bat the way I do, and that there was no need to do anything extra," Gill said at the post-match television presentation ceremony.

"It feels good when you train hard and it pays off. I'm happy to get big runs for the team," added Gill, who won the Player-of-the-Match award.

The opener explained that he was happy to play in all three formats, and that fatigue was not an issue when representing the country.

A disappointed New Zealand captain Mitchell Santner said that the game slipped away when his side lost five wickets in the PowerPlay.

"It was disappointing. It would have been nice to take the trophy, but credit to India. They played outstanding cricket. Some of their guys are in great nick at the moment. It is tough to win when you lose five wickets in the PowerPlay," Santner said.

Huge boost for Khelo India takes budget allocation to new high

Rakesh Rao
NEW DELHI

Khelo India, the nation's flagship sports development programme, continues to be the blue-eyed baby. It received more than 50 per cent of the increased allocation of ₹723.97 crore in the latest Union budget here on Wednesday.

An increase of ₹439 crore for Khelo India carries the sports budget to a new high of ₹3,397.32 crore. Importantly, Khelo India's budget of ₹1,045 crore accounts for just under a third of the total allocation.

Last year, the sports budget saw an increase of ₹305.58 crore. This year, the reflected gross increase stands at over ₹700 crore only because the Sports Ministry received a reduced allocation of ₹2,673.35 crore during the financial year against the budget of ₹3,062.60 crore.

With India's preparations for the postponed 2022 Asian Games to this year and the 2024 Paris Olympic Games set to gain pace, the Sports Authority of India's budget has seen only a marginal increase of ₹36.09 crore for a total of ₹785.82 crore.

The National Sports Federations will receive ₹325 crore – as against ₹280 last year.

The National Anti-Doping Agency (NADA) will receive a funding of ₹21.73 crore while the National Dope Testing Laboratory (NDTL) shall get ₹19.50 crore. A provision of ₹13 crore has been made for the National Centre of Sports Science and Research.

However, on the downside, the incentives for sportspersons comes down from ₹55 crore last year to ₹45 crore. Similarly, The National Sports Development Fund continues on a downward swing. It stands at ₹15 crore, down by a crore from the previous budget.

Reacting to the budget, Director General of the Confederation of Sports and Recreation Industry (CSRI) Rajpal Singh said, "We welcome the overall increase in the sports budget and reiterate our request to the Government to grant industry status to the sports sector.

"The inclusion of the sports industry in the Harmonized Master List of Infrastructure sub-sectors will make it eligible for long-term financial support from banks and other financial institutions."

Fractured forearm no deterrent for spirited Vihari

As steely as they come: Vihari bats left-handed. LALITH KALIDAS

Lalith Kalidas
INDORE

Andhra captain Hanuma Vihari's 'left-handed' batting astonished onlookers at the Holkar Stadium during the Ranji Trophy quarterfinal on Wednesday.

Madhya Pradesh was jubilant when seamer Avesh Khan castled No. 11 Prithvi Raj Yarra for the ninth wicket. Vihari, who had fractured his left forearm on the opening day while facing Avesh, decided to take matters into his hands.

In a bold act, Vihari stepped out, forcing Avesh back to his run-up. Desperation and shrewdness prompted the right-hander to shield his injury by playing left-handed.

While his makeshift avatar earned 11 runs, his presence made a bigger impact. "The doctor had advised me not to bat. But when the wickets were falling, I got an idea: 'why not bat left-handed with a single hand?'

"If I give up, the team spirit would be affected. But if I step out, even if I don't get runs, that's not a problem.

"But me being there, giving an example, was important for me too," explained Vihari about his thought process while deciding to take guard.

INBRIEF

Tendulkar felicitates India under-19 women's team

Former India captain Sachin Tendulkar felicitated the Indian team, led by Shafali Verma, which won the ICC Women's Under-19 World Cup. The squad received a cheque for ₹5 crore from the BCCI. BCCI secretary Jay Shah, BCCI president Roger Binny and BCCI vice-president Rajiv Shukla were some of the dignitaries present at the function.

Khawaja granted visa, to fly to India on Thursday

Australia opener Usman Khawaja was granted visa on Wednesday to travel to India for the Test series after the Pakistan-born cricketer was forced to miss the morning flight due to delay in issuing travel documents. His passport and visa were handed over to a Cricket Australia (CA) representative in Melbourne on Wednesday night. The Australian Test squad and support staff, led by Pat Cummins, had left for the team's training base in Bengaluru on two separate flights on Tuesday and Wednesday, but Khawaja couldn't board either as his passport and visa had not been delivered by the Indian High Commission. He will fly out on Thursday and is likely to figure in Friday's practice session too.

Injured Shreyas ruled out of first Test against Australia

The Indian team management could consider playing Shubman Gill in the middle-order ahead of Suryakumar Yadav in the first Test against Australia after Shreyas Iyer was ruled out of the series opener due to a back injury. Shreyas is at the National Cricket Academy undergoing rehabilitation.

Chelsea completes record signing of Benfica's Fernandez

Chelsea on Wednesday confirmed the signing of Argentina's World Cup winner Enzo Fernandez from Benfica for a record British transfer fee of €121 million. The 22-year-old has agreed an eight-and-a-half-year deal. The deal breaks the previous Premier League record, set by Manchester City when it signed Jack Grealish from Aston Villa for £100 million in August 2021. Jorginho joined Arsenal from Chelsea for a reported fee of £12 million. He made 143 Premier League appearances for Chelsea.

LIVE TELECAST

Ranji Trophy: Star Sports 2 (SD & HD) & Hotstar, 9.30 a.m.
KIYG 2023: DD Sports, Star Sports 3 & Hotstar, 11 a.m. onwards
Senior Women's ODI trophy: SS Select 2 (SD & HD) & Hotstar, 11 a.m.
I-League: Eurosport (SD & HD), 4.30 p.m.
Women's T20I tri-series: (final), SS Select 2 (SD & HD) & Hotstar, 6.30 p.m.
ISL: Star Sports 1 (SD & HD) & Hotstar, 7.30 p.m.
LaLiga: Sports 18-1 (SD & HD) & Jio Cinema App, 1.30 a.m. (Friday)